



WU DONG QIAN KUN

BOOK 01

Heavenly Silkworm Potato

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(Martial Universe)

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Synopsis

The Great Yan Empire exists in a world where respect can only be earned through strength. Within this Great Yan Empire, the four great clans have always stood above the rest. Among them, a particular incident in the Lin Clan resulted in the banishment of a certain individual who went on to start his own family, in hopes of one day being recognized again by the Lin Clan, and rejoining them...

Hailing from a banished family of the Great Lin Clan, when Lin Dong was very young, he watched, powerless, as his talented father was easily crushed and crippled by the overwhelming genius of the great Lin Clan, Lin Langtian.

With a despairing father, a heartbroken grandfather, and a suffering family, ever since that fateful day, Lin Dong has been driven by a deep purpose; to take revenge on the man who had taken everything and more from his family.

Armed with nothing but willpower and determination, join Lin Dong as he unknowingly discovers a destiny greater than he could ever hope to imagine when he stumbles upon a mysterious stone talisman...

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Chapter 1: Lin Dong

“Wuu.”

When Lin Dong gathered every ounce of strength to open his heavy eyelids, a simple, crude yet tidy room appeared before his eyes. This familiar scene caused him to blink distractedly, unable to make sense of why he was here, though soon after, he promptly turned his head in a flash of understanding. Sure enough he saw the two figures of a man and a woman seated at a table in the room.

“Father, mother.....”

As Lin Dong gazed at the two figures, he grew spirited and let out a soft cry.

“Dong-er, you’ve woken?”

Hearing his cries, the woman first turned her head, as she saw Lin Dong finally opening his eyes, she immediately exclaimed in happiness.

Dressed somewhat plainly and about thirty years in age, the outline of her cheek gave a sense of elegance to her face and also a type of sweet-tempered and gentle feeling. This was Lin Dong’s mother, Liu Yan.

“Unskilled and yet you pick fights with others, you are literarily

asking for trouble.”

Seated besides the woman was a man who looked to be about thirty or forty years old. His body was slightly frail yet he had a bit of sternness in his brows, he also seemed to be suffering from serious injuries as his face was pale which in turn masked up a large part of his sternness. This was Lin Dong’s father, Lin Xiao.

Turning to face his often-times stern father, Lin Dong ostensibly displayed a sliver of fear, pulling back his neck, though soon after he somewhat defiantly declared: “Who asked them to call my father useless right in front of my face...”

As he spoke, Lin Dong reached to feel the still aching wound on his chest, and clenched his teeth. Today was merely one of the tests for the Lin Family and he had only went down to gauge his progress. Today’s setback hardly dented his faith in himself because he had only been training for about half a year and he did not expect to make much progress. He remained confident that given the same time and conditions to train, he would not lose out to anyone.

Nevertheless, right after the test ended, as Lin Dong was preparing to make his way home, he encountered a fellow which he had some bad history with. His original plan was to ignore that chap, however after a few rounds of deliberate provocation, he could no longer stand it and in a moment of fury, the young and hot-blooded Lin Dong attacked the provocator. Nonetheless, the results were clear as day as he was immediately soundly knocked out by a heavy punch.....

“Lin Shan, you had better remember this! The next time, I vow to smash your head into a pulp, or my name is not Lin Dong!”

Lin Dong ground his teeth together. The Lin Shan mentioned, was the perpetrator of this incident, and also the number one enemy in Lin Dong's heart. Because their fathers had bad blood between them, Lin Shan constantly tried to inconvenience Lin Dong, and the latest incident was just one of many.

One moment he was resolutely clenching his jaw, yet the next, Lin Dong was hanging his head dejectedly. Though Lin Shan was extremely vile, the fact remained that he was currently already at the 4th layer of Tempered Body. In the Lin family, this kind of achievement was considered better than average. Compared to the 2nd layer that Lin Dong was at, it was indeed much better.

In the path of training, the body should be trained first as everything begins with one's body. After all, the human body is the most wonderfully mysterious thing in the world.

Simply said, Tempered Body was the cultivation of one's body, allowing one's body to gradually strengthen and eventually grow stronger from outside to within. When the muscles and bones within the body have strengthened to a certain level, it will give rise to a seedling of Yuan Power. Only when a seedling of Yuan Power naturally appears in the body, can one then be called a true practitioner.

Tempered Body is divided into 9 layers, the difference between the first 3 layers is not significant as it only improves one's physical body and foundations slightly. Only when the body has

been cultivated to the 4th layer, will the advantages of training gradually surface. At that level, the skin will slowly harden to become as tough as wood or rock, and both one's strength and speed will be substantially upgraded.

Since Lin Shan was currently at that level, Lin Dong, who had only mastered the 2nd layer of Tempered Body, was clearly outclassed.

As for why there was such a disparity between the two, although they were both of similar age, it was not due to a difference in their potential. For the Tempered Body levels, talent was not a key factor, in fact it could be said that anyone could train in it. However, how far they were able to progress, would depend on one's wealth and affinity.

Nonetheless, to reach the 9th layer of Tempered body is an extremely difficult and tiring affair. This was because only by constantly pushing the limits of one's physical body, could one's body gradually grow stronger.

Yet this way of testing one's limits was akin to squeezing out the potential in one's body. If one's body was not sufficiently restored after the 'squeezing', one's body would be injured due to the strain. At that time, not only would the training be affected but the whole body would be riddled with injuries. An overall loss.

Thus, as one attempts to master the Tempered Body, they would need various nourishing elixirs to supplement their body before they can progress with their training. However, as these elixirs are mostly expensive commodities, those without adequate wealth

would not be able to afford it.

And this is the so called wealth!

The reason why Lin Shan was able to surpass Lin Dong by 2 layers was not because he had trained for half a year more but largely because his father was in charge of the finances in the Lin family. In comparison to Lin Dong who lacked this good fortune and therefore the access to elixirs to nourish his body. Thus his training progress was naturally much slower than the former.....

Suddenly, as Lin Xiao heard Lin Dong's mutterings, his palm that was resting on the table clenched tightly, as his expression grew a shade darker. To the side, Liu Yan who had seen this change promptly signalled to Lin Dong with her eyes before the latter hastily shut his mouth.

“No need to whine, concentrate on training and others will naturally shutup.”

Lin Xiao waved his hands as he said: “Liu Yan, take that Red Ginseng and pass it to Dong-er, with the Red Ginseng, his training should go slightly faster. There's only half a year left till the family competition, if he doesn't make the most of this time to train, he will only bring shame to us.”

“Xiao-ge, that Red Ginseng is for your injuries.....” Liu Yan hastily said before she fell into a quiet stupor.

“I am already a useless person, no matter what kind of remedies are used, it would all be for naught. In the future, I will spend more time finding elixirs in the mountain for Dong-er.” Lin Xiao declared in a self mocking tone as he shook his head.

“Father is not useless, Father used to be the strongest practitioner in the family excluding grandpa!” Hearing Lin Xiao’s words, Lin Dong exclaimed, red-faced. As a child, his father was the biggest figure in his heart.

“Strongest Practitioner.....”

Lin Xiao’s subsciously clenched his fist tightly as a deep pain flashed across his face. A moment later, he stood up and tiredly walked outside the room.

“Liu Yan, brew the tonic for our child, my injuries are fine, it’s already been so many years, what use would one stalk of Red Ginseng possibly be?”

Gazing at his somewhat decrepit back, Liu Yan’s eyes reddened, who could have imaged that that the man who was once the most gifted and remarkable man in Qingyang Town would end up in such a slump.

“Mother, don’t cry, Dong-er promises that he will work hard in his training. And when the time comes, I will find a way to cure father.” Lin Dong softly said as he pulled at the corner of Liu Yan’s clothes.

“Dong-er, don’t blame your father if he is strict towards you. It is just because he has devoted everything to you, after all, you should know that you are his only hope.”

Liu Yan muttered softly as she lowered her head, lightly wiping at her eyes and stroking Lin Dong’s tiny head while she gazed at the earnest expression on Lin Dong’s young and tender face.

“Mother, I have heard that top three contestants in the upcoming family competition will obtain a type of 3rd grade elixir called Vermillion Blood Clotting Fruit. I once heard an uncle say that it is very effective in treating injuries. If I manage to obtain it, it would definitely aid to heal the wounds in Father’s body.” As if he had suddenly thought of something, Lin Dong lifted his head as he said while watching Liu Yan with shining eyes.

“Vermillion Blood Clotting Fruit.....” Hearing these words, Liu Yan was slightly taken aback. Nonetheless, she helplessly shook her head: “It is not easy to be the top three in the family competition, it is good that you have the heart. Mother will leave first and brew the Red Ginseng for you.”

As she finished, Liu Yan turned to walk out of the room. Within the current younger generation in the Lin family, there were already a few that had obtained decent accomplishments, therefore it would not be easy for Lin Dong to enter the top three and obtain the Vermillion Blood Clotting Fruit. Hence, she did not take this matter too seriously.

As he gazed at Liu Yan’s leaving back, Lin Dong’s lips pursed tightly together, clenching his tiny fists: “Mother, rest assured, I

will definitely obtain that Vermillion Blood Clotting Fruit and heal the injuries in father's body!"

As Lin Dong thought of Lin Xiao's injury, a deep hatred suddenly surfaced in his eyes. The reason why father was often ridiculed by many in the family was all because of that one man!

The Lin family that Lin Dong belonged to was only a small family, even in Qingyang Town, they could not be considered the best. Yet this unremarkable looking Lin family had a highly respectable background that would shock many people: they were of the Lin Clan.

One of the four great clans of the Great Yan dynasty, the Lin Clan!

From a certain point of view, the Lin Family of Qingyang Town could count as an extension of the Lin Clan, yet to Lin Dong who had never travelled beyond a hundred miles of Qingyang Town, the overwhelming strength of the Lin Clan in the Great Yan Dynasty was just another unfamiliar and distant thing.

What Lin Dong knew from the occasional scraps of information gleaned from his father, was that the branch they belonged to was actually once part of the inner circle of the Lin Clan. It was only because of one mission. The failure of Lin Dong's grandfather in that mission had lead to a huge loss for the clan, consequently, he was expelled from the inner circle and banished to Qingyang Town.

Here, he established this small Lin Family and over these tens of years, he has tried everything he could in order to fulfill a lifelong dream: to return to the inner circle of the Lin Clan.

Yet all his efforts did not amount to much. All that he had accomplished was not even worth mentioning to the huge and incomparable Lin Clan. Therefore, he could only turn his attention to other places, such as the Ten-Year Clan Gathering of the Lin Clan.

This was the most important gathering of the Lin Clan and also an extremely famous event in the entire Great Yan Dynasty. Held every ten years, each gathering presented the perfect opportunity for the younger generations in the clan to stand in the spotlight and make a name for themselves. Moreover, many of the prizes for this humongous competition were naturally so generous, that they would draw covetous gazes. Yet, the most appealing caveat for Lin Dong's grandfather lay in the fact that as long as one could enter the top ten in this gathering, even if you were an outsider to the clan, you will be promoted into the inner circle with no obstructions and obtain unparalleled honor.

Thus, the clan gathering had become the new dawn in Lin Dong's grandfather's long night of despair. But because of his age, he was already unable to participate, therefore he placed all of his hopes onto his five sons that came from different mothers. Naturally the most outstanding one of them all, Lin Dong's father, became grandfather's and the entire Lin Family's ray of hope.

Even though Lin Dong's father carried this heavy burden on his shoulders, he did not betray their expectations. Among the 5

brothers, he was the earliest to breakthrough the 9th Layer of Tempered Body, and advance into the “Yuan” stage. Furthermore, in another short four years, he once again broke through the “Yuan” stage to become the 2nd Heavenly Yuan master in the Lin Family after grandfather Lin Zhentian.

This spectacular progress caused the normally quiet and stern grandfather to elicit a kind and gratified smile on his aged face every time he met his father. It was said that in all of the ten long years, this was the time that grandfather smiled the most.

However, when the Ten-Year Clan Gathering finally arrived, the outcome shocked all the members of the Lin Family, and left them deep in the abyss of despair.

One move!

In just one move, his father, the shining ray of hope for the Lin Family, was cruelly defeated!

Furthermore, this happened in the first match right at the start of the gathering!

Years of expectations and nurturing crumbled into dust within that brief moment.

The final reward for losers was naturally countless peculiar gazes as well as an endless stream of mocking sneers. Like a pack of stray dogs, they returned to Qingyang Town defeated.

That night, his father left the inner district of the Lin Family and moved to live on a small, desolate hill at the furthest reaches of the Lin Family territory. From then on, he never again touched anything from the Lin Clan. According to him, he had already lost all right to do so.

However, fortune never arrives in pairs; disaster never strikes alone.

After that defeat, what had been bestowed onto Lin Xiao was not merely depression. Afterwards, he was even more grieved to find that the person he had fought with not only defeated him with one palm but also, without a shred of mercy, used an almost beast-like violent Yuan force to ravage the insides of his body till it was a total mess.

With injuries of this degree, Lin Xiao's lost his Heavenly Yuan level of strength and returned to the Earthly Yuan level. In addition, the serious injuries also caused the channels in his body to be disrupted and clogged up, and no matter how he trained, he found further advancement nearly impossible.

Within the family, what was once respectful gazes had gradually turned to sighs and disappointment.....

Faced with disaster after disaster, Lin Xiao finally gave up all hope. Everytime he got drunk, he would furiously pound at his own chest. The sound of the dull thuds broke his mother's heart as she quietly stood aside and brushed off her falling tears. Even

though Lin Dong was still young when he witnessed this scene, he felt as though his heart was sliced to shreds. At the same time, in his young heart, seeds of hatred were quietly planted towards the man who had humiliated and devastated his father.

He not only destroyed my father but he ruined his family as well!

As for the man in question, later on, Lin Dong by chance heard his uncle and the others mention him with loathing and powerless tones.

At 10, he started training.

At 12 he broke through the 9th Layer of Tempered Body to enter into Yuan territory.

At 14, he advanced to the Earthly Yuan level.

At 17 he advanced to the Heavenly Yuan level.

At 25, the Yuan Qi in his body exchanged Yin and Yang, finally succeeding in forming a Dan. Like a carp that became a dragon, in one fell swoop, he joined the ranks of the rarified few in the Great Yan Dynasty to ever form a Yuan Dan before the age of 30.

The story of his life was practically one legendary feat after another.

His name was Lin Langtian.

In his room, Lin Dong clenched his fist tightly, as thick hatred brewed in his eyes.

Chapter 2: Penetrating Fist

In the wee hours of the morning, stood a lonely mountain peak surrounded by a thick white fog that caused one's vision to become fuzzy.

“Huff~huff~”

Within a dense forest behind the mountain peak, a sudden and intense gasp sounded out. Upon taking a closer look, in an open space within the woods, a tiny figure could be seen hanging from a thick and sturdy branch using both of his hands. This tiny body borrowed the pulling force from his arms to move up and down repeatedly. As he made these movements, his body formed some strange poses; the kind of poses that utilized all the muscles in the body, exercising all of them together.

Additionally, there were a few pitch-black iron weights hanging on his arms and ankles. Sweat dripped off his clothes and onto the metal weights, causing them to likewise become dripping with wetness.

Naturally, this tiny figure was Lin Dong. Unlike his peers, he did not enjoy the luxury of wealth and riches due to his childhood circumstances, but rather his strict father taught him that the most important things for training were willpower and diligence. These things were his only advantage over the rest of his peers who were blessed with a good amount of wealth.

Sweat dripped into his eyes causing a stinging pain that made Lin

Dong clench his jaw in response. He could already feel the pain stemming from extreme overexertion. At this point, most people would definitely choose to take a break and rest. However, he remembered what his father told him: that only during this time, will one be able to break through his limits. Hence.....he must endure!

He absolutely must not let go!

For the Family Competition half a year later, he needed to train as if his life was on the line!

The sensation you receive as you approach your limit leaves you feeling dizzy and nauseous. Nonetheless, Lin Dong gritted his teeth and persevered on. Suddenly, he felt a strange heat gushing from within his body, and immediately this feeling refreshed him and lifted his spirits.

It was the power of the Red Ginseng!

Several days ago, the stalk of Red Ginseng was meant to be used to heal Lin Xiao's injuries. However, upon Lin Xiao insistence, it was finally delivered into Lin Dong's body.

It must be said that this kind of elixir truly provides a major boost for a low-leveled Tempered Body practitioner like Lin Dong. Within a mere few days of training, Lin Dong could clearly feel that his body had become at least twice as strong as it used to be.

However, while the Red Ginseng's provided a major boost to Lin Dong's training, the power of the elixir was not unlimited. After all, this Red Ginseng was merely a grade 1 elixir. Therefore, after five days, the effects of the elixir gradually started to dissipate.

However, as the effect of the elixir dissipated, it did not completely disappear. This was because Lin Dong's body was only at the initial stage of the strengthening process, thus it was unable to absorb all of the medicinal effects of the elixir. Hence, some of the medicinal effects remained hidden within the deepest parts of his body. Only when Lin Dong's body was pushed to the extremes, would it finally be squeezed out and devoured by his hungry body.

As the warmth of the medicinal effect slowly seep into his body, Lin Dong felt as though he could hear the countless cells in his body rejoicing together as all his fatigue and pain were gradually replaced with an invigorating energy.

“Hei...”

Lin Dong grabbed onto the tree trunk and violently flung his body, with a somersault, he flipped in the air and steadily landed on the ground. He stretched his back as all the bones in his body suddenly made popping sounds. To Lin Dong's delight, he found that his body had indeed become much tougher.

“Tempered Body 3rd Layer!”

Lin Dong gripped his tiny fists tightly as he enjoyed the power surging through his muscles, his tiny face breaking out into a smile

of surprise and delight. Due to his family circumstances, ever since he started training, he had little opportunity to make use of elixirs. Thus, he did not expect that just after a single use, the results actually turned out so good.

“Hmm, not bad...”

As Lin Dong was busy celebrating his advancement, a voice echoed from beside him. He hastily turned his head to see Lin Xiao standing below a big tree, clothed in a plain attire. Furthermore, he could see a shadow of a smile emerging on Lin Xiao’s usually stern face.

“Father.”

Lin Dong excitedly proclaimed when he saw Lin Xiao who was standing beside the tree.

Lin Xiao nodded his head as he approached Lin Dong. Scanning his son’s body, a rare smile finally emerged as he said: “Tempered Body 3rd Layer, not bad.”

“It was all thanks to the Red Ginseng”, Lin Dong chuckled as he dipped and shook his head.

“The Red Ginseng is merely a grade 1 elixir, even if others consumed it, it will still take them at least one or two months to advance the Tempered Body from the 2nd to the 3rd Layer. This is the result of your hard work and training.” Lin Xiao softly sighed

as he gazed at Lin Dong who was standing before him. He had naturally noticed how hard Lin Dong was pushing himself during this period of time. Several times, he would see his wife tearing up and even though he did not say anything, as Lin Dong's father, he nonetheless felt some heart-ache.

He understood that the reason why Lin Dong was training so incessantly was because he desired to achieve a good result in the upcoming annual Family Competition that was half a year away. This would restore some of his father's honor and reputation in the Lin Family.

Lin Dong grinned happily as he felt that all his hard work and effort after all this time had finally bore some fruit. He felt that he was catching up to the top students in the Lin Family.

"You can throw away the iron weights now. Since you have already mastered Tempered Body 3rd Layer, you are now just eligible to train in martial arts. Let me impart a set of fist techniques to you." Lin Xiao said.

Upon hearing this news, Lin Dong's jet-black eyes immediately lit up. Even though he had finally reached Tempered Body 3rd Layer, he did not know any techniques at all, and when he fought with others, he could only rely on brute force. Therefore, in his heart, he was very eager to learn these martial arts in order to boost his fighting potential. However, because of the temperament of his father's body, Lin Xiao had yet to teach him any martial arts. Now that his chance has finally arrived, he was naturally ecstatic.

"All the martial arts in the world can be classified into nine levels

and three categories. The levels 1,2 and 3 belong to the lower category while the levels 7,8 and 9 belong

to the top category and the rest belong to the middle category. What I am about to teach you is a lower category, level 1 fist technique, termed as the “Penetrating Fist.” Lin Xiao explained.

Lin Dong nodded his head, he did not feel upset even though he was only learning a lower category, level 1 fist technique. He understood that you need to take things step by step, and that for most people, it was already a great opportunity to learn a level 1 martial arts skill. It is said that within the Lin Family, the highest martial arts was merely a level 4 martial arts skill and this was obtained by grandpa from the Hidden Scripture Pavilion through chance when he was still a inner circle member of the Lin Clan.

“Even though martial arts have different levels, the most important part lies in the user himself. In the hands of a strong user, even a level 1 martial arts skill can become a powerful and deadly force. Therefore, the stronger one’s body is, the more powerful the martial arts’ attacks become.” Lin Xiao extended his palm and signalled to Lin Dong: “Come, use all your strength and your greatest speed to attack me.”

Lin Dong blinked his eyes, as he discarded the iron weights strapped on his wrist, before dashing forward to deliver a punch at Lin Xiao.

As he faced Lin Dong’s full-power blow, Lin Xiao merely stretched forth his hand, and deftly slid his palm across Lin Dong’s sleeves. A crisp crackling sound then followed before Lin Dong

jumped in pain. Gritting his teeth, he hastily rolled up his sleeves only to discover that his entire arm had turned red.

“Penetrating Fist requires one to exert force while sticking closely to one’s clothes. If I had exerted more force or even used a trace of Yuan power, your whole arm including your bones will be completely shattered.” Lin Xiao casually followed up: “ In order to master Penetrating Fist, you need to train with your clothes. Since this martial art emphasizes on exerting force while sticking closely to one’s clothes, when you are training in this skill, the clothes that stick to your body will produce a sound as well. There are a total of 9 forms for this skill, also known as the 9 echoes. This is because when you use each form, a crisp sound will echo out. And as each form is used in succession and the 9 echoes eventually all sound out, its power can even be comparable to that of a level 2 martial arts skill.”

“You had better watch closely and memorize all nine forms closely!”

With a low shout, Lin Xiao stretched out his limbs and positioned his stance, seeming as fierce as a tiger. And when he exerted his moves, it looked as agile as a monkey. A series of crisp crackling sounds continuously sounded out from his clothes.

Lin Dong gazed attentively as Lin Xiao’s fists danced around, his mind concentrated solely on the sight before him. Everything else was ignored, and all that was reflected in his eyes was this set of fist technique!

Because he was teaching Lin Dong, Lin Xiao purposely slowed

down and repeated each move a few times. Finally he gently slowed to a halt and turned to face Lin Dong, asking: “Have you memorized it?”

Lin Dong muttered to himself for a while before nodding his head, somewhat unsure.

“Oh? Why don’t you show me?”

Astonishment streaked across Lin Xiao’s face, although he had slowed his speed by quite a bit, these 9 forms of the Penetrating Fist were not extremely easy to learn. Moreover, this was Lin Dong’s first ever contact with martial arts, could he have actually managed to memorise it so quickly?

As if he could sense Lin Xiao’s astonishment, Lin Dong took two steps forward, and extended both both fists outwards before he performed a set of forms, though in a shoddy and slow manner.

A smither of delight emerged on Lin Xiao’s face as he stood to one side and witnessed his son go through all 9 forms of the Penetrating Fist. Even though his performance was very amateurish and carried little substance, his accomplishment was still impressive especially considering that this was his first ever exposure to the Penetrating Fist. Moreover, this also demonstrated that he was a gifted and talented learner. Upon discovery of this fact, Lin Xiao felt overjoyed as he realized his son had inherited the kind of potential that he had at that age.

“Father, why is it that when I use the Penetrating Fist, there isn’t

even a single sound?” Lin Dong helplessly asked as he completed another set of forms in shoddy and slow manner.

“You little brat, if it were so easy to produce a sound, then this set of moves would not live up to its name.” Lin Xiao chided before continuing: “Remember that as you train, carefully feel your power flowing. As long as you can make your clothes follow your power and not the other way around, then you would be considered to have successfully learnt this set of moves. Come, try a few more times.”

Lin Dong’s mouth chanted these words a few times before he tried to turn theory into action as he drilled. Meanwhile, Lin Xiao stood beside him, while occasionally pointing out some mistakes or slipups.

On the vacant land in the woods, a figure of a boy continuously danced about. Even as sweat sprayed his body, it did not distract him even the slightest bit, as his tiny face remained especially serious.

The afternoon quickly passed as Lin Dong continuously practiced without rest, and his efforts was not for naught. Lin Dong gradually became more proficient at the 9 forms of the Penetrating Fist and although he was still unable to produce any sounds, his attitude did not waver at all.

“Let today’s training end here, you can resume your practice tomorrow.” Lin Xiao suddenly said as he glanced to the sky before turning back to look at Lin Dong who was perspiring profusely. The amount of dedication and persistence the latter had displayed

in his training had caused even him to be somewhat moved. Soon after, he secretly sighed as he moaned the fact that his many years of dispiritedness had forced his child to mature a lot faster than normal.

“En, Father please go back to rest first, let me stay just a little longer before returning home.” Lin Dong replied, his fists did not stop as he concentrated on following Lin Xiao’s instructions to feel the tiny movements and changes in the power flowing through his muscles.

In response, Lin Xiao could only helplessly shake his head. Lin Dong’s improvement was very distinct, but to cause a sound with the Penetrating Fist was not easy, Lin Xiao had previously trained for a whole week before he finally succeeded.

Quickly informing Lin Dong that he was leaving, Lin Xiao turned around with his hands at his back. As he turned, a smiling expression surfaced on his face, the perceptive ability that Lin Dong displayed today caused him to be extremely satisfied.

“This child is unusually perceptive and possesses an unrelenting willpower that even surpasses me at my prime, this shouldn’t be too difficult for him.....”

“Pa!”

As this thought flashed across Lin Xiao’s mind, a loud, clear and crisp ‘Pa’ sound abruptly sounded out from behind. Immediately, his face went rigid as he staggered forward. Yet, at this moment, a

bright light sparkled in his eyes.

“It appears that it was not too difficult but a rather easy matter for him to accomplish

Chapter 3: The Mysterious Rock Pool

“A sound!”

In the open space, Lin Dong stared blankly at his fist as an euphoric look emerged on his small face. Yet when he lifted his head, he saw that Lin Xiao’s figure was already slowly walking out of the forest.

“Heh heh, tomorrow I will show father, I am sure that he will be pleasantly surprised.” Lin Dong grinned. Suddenly waves of pain emitted from his arm, he hastily lifted his sleeve only to find that his entire arm was covered in blood red marks, so much so that there were even places where the skin had peeled back as blood continuously oozed out.

“Hss.....”

Previously, he was so wrapped up in practice that he did not realise, but now that he had stopped, the pain suddenly rushed forth, causing Lin Dong to grimace in pain. He knew that this pain had been caused by the practice of the Penetrating Fist: injuries due to the friction accumulated from long periods of rubbing his skin against his clothes.

“There’s still some time, I guess I’ll go to that place first to soak for a while.....”

Lin Dong lifted his head to glance at the color of the sky before abruptly running off to the back of the mountain. Approximately

10 minutes later, a steep cliff appeared before his eyes. He scanned his surroundings cautiously, before following a path of jutting rocks down the cliff. These rocks were not easy to find, yet they formed nicely into a secret path.

Lin Dong was quite familiar with this path, thus as he carefully descended, there were no accidents. After a while, a cave that was hidden from sight by a few huge rocks appeared before him.

The cave's location was very well concealed and it was also very well hidden behind the few huge rocks around it. If one was not specifically searching for it, it would be nearly impossible to find. Moreover, in a normal situation, no one would bother doing this kind of thing.

Leaping into the cave, a cool and refreshing feeling blew away the stench and sweat on Lin Dong's body. Compared to the blistering hot weather outside, the cave was like a different world, and also a great place to take shelter from the heat.

The inside of the cave was not extremely spacious. Other than a 6-10 metre wide rock pool at the centre of the cave, there was nothing else special in this cave.

Walking towards to the rock pool, one would see that it was filled with crystal clear water, and atop the water a slightly cold breeze floated back and forth.

“Splash!”

Arriving beside the rock pool, Lin Dong quickly took off his clothes, and straightaway jumped into the water. The slightly cold air caused his body to shiver for a little but he quickly adapted to the cold.

Lin Dong had found this cave by chance during his younger years. Only Qing Tan and him knew about this place. The water here was much colder than other places and at the height of summer, Lin Dong loved to come here and immerse himself in the pool. However, besides being cool and refreshing, there seemed to be no other effect.

Of course, this was not exactly accurate as every time after Lin Dong soaked in the water here, he would unknowingly feel his mind become particularly sharp and no matter what he did, he would be able to quickly enter into a concentrated state.

There did not seem to be any merit to this kind of feeling before, but now that Lin Dong had learnt the Penetrating Fist, he realised that being in a concentrated state had quite a substantial effect on his training progress. Or else, he would probably find it hard to pick up Penetrating Fist in such a short period of time, not to mention practicing it until he managed to produce a sound.

“Is it just me?”

As he laid in the rock pool, Lin Dong cupped some water in his hands and watched it slowly flow off. His small face creased, if this thing was so miraculous, he would have achieved the level of Yuan Power long ago, unlike his current slow pace.

“Once I’ve trained till the Tempered Body 6th Layer, I would be able to refine essence into Yuan and with Yuan Power, I would finally become a true practitioner!” Lin Dong excitedly proclaimed as he slapped the sides of his face, looking forward to that day. Nonetheless, within the younger generation of the Lin Family, there were only a handful who had reached that level.

Yuan Power was the most important thing in training. It is said that a strong practitioner would be able to cause landslides with just a sweep of his hands. This earth shattering might was difficult for Lin Dong to imagine, as he was still a tiny brat at the first stage.

And the source of this kind of might was Yuan Power. A type of miraculous force that floated between Heaven and Earth. Yet to absorb the Yuan Power from Heaven and Earth, one is required to train until a Yuan Power Seed is produced. Only then, could even more Yuan Power be absorbed into one’s body.

Lin Dong leaned against the edge of the rock pool, as he relaxed, his head facing upwards with his eyes shut. His thoughts ran wild for a while before unexpectedly ,he gradually fell into a deep sleep. This period of training was too extreme for him and now that he had finally found some time to relax, his pent up exhaustion started to spread out from his bones.

As Lin Dong soundly slept, the cave once again became peaceful as the pool water gently heaved about.

“Plop.....”

Amidst the silence, a disturbance suddenly started in the clear water. A dark red drop of blood rolled down from Lin Dong's injured arm and quietly fell into the pool.

As this drop of blood fell, the originally peaceful water abruptly started boiling. One by one, bubbles with faint traces of blood-like color emerged to rise up from the surface of the water before bursting around Lin Dong's resting body. Traces of faintly red colored liquid scattered in the air and as if they had a mind of their own, moved to twine around Lin Dong's body before finally quickly entering through his pores.

Just as these faintly red colored liquid seeped into Lin Dong's body, it gave rise to a sensation as if the muscles all over his body were violently compressed. Like a tide, a torrent of sweat gushed forth, converging together and then streaming into the water.

Just as the sweat riddled with black impurities seeped out from his body, Lin Dong, whose body had previously grown by a centimeter after he broke through Tempered Body 3rd Layer, felt that his body had shrunk back to its previous size. This sensation was akin to ferociously squeezing out all of the water from a wet sponge.

After approximately 10 minutes, the water in the pool stopped boiling. Just as the pool water began to calm down, Lin Dong suddenly awoke and shouted : "Hot!".

"Splash!"

As he shrieked, Lin Dong swiftly ducked his head and immersed his whole body in the pool. After a while, he finally broke the surface to catch his breath. A look of bewilderment was plastered on his face as shortly before he awoke, he felt as though he was being baked in a furnace, and the burning sensation he experienced was what caused him to involuntarily scream out.

“Why would it be so hot in here?” Lin Dong pondered as he stood in the pool for a while in order to cool himself off, before he finally decided to climb out.

Standing besides the rock pool while thinking for a while, Lin Dong wordlessly shook his head. Just as he grabbed up his clothes and started to put them on, his gaze suddenly paused at his arm.

“Huh?”

Lin Dong stared at his arm in wide disbelief. He clearly remembered that this arm was previously scarred with bloody wounds after his training, yet now all of his wounds seemed to have miraculously disappeared?

Perplexed, Lin Dong gently stroke his once wound ridden arm, suddenly, his body stiffened. An incredulous look swiftly surfaced on his face as he discovered that the skin on his arm had substantially hardened.

This kind of situation was a sign that he was rapidly approaching the Tempered Body 4th Layer.

“How.....is this possible?!”

This discovery left Lin Dong dumbstruck as he stood in a daze on the spot.

(TLN: 丈 – Zhang is a chinese ‘feet’ that is equivalent to about 3.3meters, the chinese RAWs state it was about 2 to 3 丈)

Chapter 4: The Secret Of The Rock Pool

“Illusion... An illusion... It must be an illusion!”

Foolishly gazing at his arm for a moment, Lin Dong shut his eyes and firmly inhaled in a few breaths of air. Only when his mind gradually calmed down did he once again gently stroke his arm, though still slightly trembling.

Under his touch, the outer layer of skin felt reasonably hard. Although it had yet to reach the level of hardness of rocks or wood, Lin Dong's skin was clearly several times harder than before!

This was indeed a sign that he was just about to advance into the Tempered Body 4th Layer. He just needed to wait for this kind of skin to harden a little more and then it would truly be at the Tempered Body 4th Layer.

Yet.....Lin Dong's mouth fell open, the disbelief on his face was like he had seen a ghost. He had only just advanced to the Tempered Body 3rd Layer today and it had not even been half a day since then. How could he suddenly be on the verge of advancing to the Tempered Body 4th Layer?

This miracle straightaway caused Lin Dong to be somewhat giddy. Flushed red with excitement, he continuously walked to and fro at the side of the rock pool. If he were able to continue at this kind of pace, would the top 3 in the Family Competition even be worth mentioning? Even if it were the Ten-Year Clan Gathering of the Lin Clan, he would not have the slightest worry.

“How.....did this happen?”

Although he was still giddy from happiness and excitement, Lin Dong had matured at an earlier age than most, therefore he managed to regain his calm and wits after a while. His tiny face tightly wrinkled up as he started to recall all the details of this affair. Yet there was nothing strange about the cave, thus, after taking a slow look around the cave, his gaze eventually came to rest upon the rock pool.

“Could there really be something strange about this rock pool?”

A stunned look flitted across his face, but soon after he quickly shook his head. Since young, he had soaked in this rock pool countless times, yet it was the first time something like today had ever happened!

What had actually happened?

It could not possibly be because of the Red Ginseng as it was merely a grade 1 elixir. The fact that it allowed him to reach the Tempered Body 3rd Layer in 10 days was already a sky-shattering achievement.

“There was definitely something different today.”

Lin Dong tightly pursed his lips together, a stubborn determination on his small face. He understood that it would be of

utmost importance to him to discover the mystery within.

“I was more tired than usual today.....yet this was not the first time.....that I have slept in here? I’ve slept in here before.....”

Lin Dong squatted beside the rock pool, his brows tightly knitted together in thought., His palm subconsciously moved to stroke his arm, and he froze. His gaze slowly moved to fix on his arm; where many traces of blood used to be.....

“Blood?”

Lin Dong’s eyes brightened. He suddenly pulled out a small dagger hidden in a slit within a pile of rocks near the rock pool that he had previously left behind.

Lin Dong gently sliced his finger tip with the dagger, causing a drop of blood to emerge He hesitated for a second before he carefully dripped it into the rock pool.

“Plop!”

The sound of blood dripping into the pool resonated clearly within the quietness of the cave. However, Lin Dong kept his eyes keenly peeled onto the location where the drop of blood had fallen.

Just as the drop of blood touched the rock pool, a wave of ripples emerged as the reddish hue of the blood gradually dissipated. Water bubbles swiftly emerged from the serene rock pool, startling

Lin Dong. A reddish liquid was faintly discernable within each bubble.

Lin Dong's throat clenched as he hesitantly extended his hand into the rock pool. Instantly, the water bubbles exploded and a gooey light-red liquid stuck onto his palm. The liquid then slowly seeped in through his pores.

As the light-red liquid seeped into his body, Lin Dong's palm suddenly experienced a burning sensation. This sensation was exactly the same as how he felt when he was abruptly awoken. Moreover, this time he could clearly feel that as the liquid seeped into his palm, the skin on his palm was gradually becoming tougher.

“This is indeed the case!”

As he noted the changes to his palm, Lin Dong's tiny face instantly lit up. He had guessed correctly! The water in this rock pool required blood to activate their special properties.

Lin Dong gripped then extended his palm a few times, only to discover that the skin on this palm had indeed become much tougher than the rest of his body. Furthermore, this effect was achieved after only a short exposure. According to Lin Dong's calculations, he estimated that the effect of this water was truly legendary and even exceeded the effects of those costly level 3 elixirs sold in Qingyang Town.

“Hmm, how is it that this water can bring such a remarkable

effect that even surpasses that of a level 3 elixir?”

Over the years, Lin Dong had found out that the water from the rock pool was merely normal spring water. Even though the water was refreshing, Lin Dong was fairly certain that this spring water did not possess any special effects. However, now that he had encountered this situation, he could not find an explanation .

Lin Dong sighed deeply as he rubbed his forehead. This mysterious rock pool had overly excited his emotions and he decided to lie down beside the rock pool to take a breather. Regardless, even though he was unable to uncover the reason why this rock pool held mysterious powers, this discovery was still bound to be highly beneficial to him.

Due to his injuries, Lin Xiao requires several elixirs in order to nurse his health. However, these elixirs are expensive and owing to Lin Xiao's stubborn nature, he refused to accept any financial support from the Lin Family. As such, he would often try his luck and go hunt for elixirs by himself. Inevitably, this resulted in Lin Dong being unable to enjoy the same privileged training conditions as his peers in the Lin Family.

Hence, at this juncture, the effects of the rock pool was especially important to Lin Dong.

“The effects of this rock pool must absolutely be kept a secret!”

Lin Dong gripped his tiny fist. He understood that he not only required the aid of this rock pool, but that if news of this rock pool

spread out, it will surely lead to a huge commotion. At that time, perhaps several other factions in the Qingyang Town may get involved and this may spell a small calamity onto the whole Lin Family.

“Possessing treasure is no sin, but it will often lead to trouble!”

Even though Lin Dong was still young, he clearly understood this principle.

As Lin Dong tightly pursed his lips, he formulated a plan in his heart. Just as he was about to leave, something suddenly caught his eye and he softly gasped. He immediately turned his vision onto the ceiling of the cave as he caught a glimpse of light flickering over there.

Under normal circumstances, if Lin Dong encountered this situation, he would not give it even the slightest notice. However, now that he knew the effects of the rock pool, he became extremely attentive to the whole area surrounding the cave.

Lin Dong kept his eyes firmly locked onto the location where he spotted the flickering lights. Under his watchful gaze, the flickering light appeared again. However, it looked as though the light was flickering slightly more hastily. Soon after, a ray of light fell down into the rock pool.

Due to the ray of light, a gentle ripple emerged on the surface of the rock pool.

Lin Dong stared at the location where the ray of light had fell into the rock pool. As he swallowed, he remembered catching a glimpse of what seemed to be a dark-red liquid within the light. That liquid... it was exactly what Lin Dong saw after his blood fell into the rock pool.

“It seems that the secret is hidden above.....”

Lin Dong softly murmured as his eyes brightened and he lifted his head to gaze above at the ceiling of the cave.

Chapter 5: The Mysterious Stone Talisman

“What is this?”

Lin Dong stared blankly at the object in his hand; it looked like a faintly ash-colored stone piece and was about as big as two fingers put together. Though it looked like a stone, as he rolled it over in his palm, it felt strangely soft. This kind of softness did not feel like that of a stone, yet it was also not like jade and even more not like wood.

Like stone yet not stone, like jade yet not jade, like wood yet not wood.

After Lin Dong had painstakingly climbed to the roof of the cave and searched about, he finally managed to find this stone piece in a hidden crevice. From the location it was found, It seemed like the liquid that had dripped into the rock pool had originated from this object.

Embedded within an extremely clear palm impression in such a dark place atop the mountain. If one were to take a closer look at the impression, he would find that it was so well imprinted that even the lines on the palm could be clearly seen. As he looked at the mysterious palm impression, Lin Dong suddenly realized that perhaps, someone had already arrived at this mountain cave long before he ever did.

“What a mysterious object.”

As Lin Dong muttered, he noticed that on this thumb-sized stone piece, some cryptic patterns which looked like some sort of mystical characters were faintly discernable.

These mystical characters covered every inch of the stone piece, causing it to resemble a mysterious stone talisman.

At this juncture, besides the cryptic and profound looking mystical characters on the stone talisman, there were no other unusual aspects. Yet Lin Dong understood that the shining drop of red liquid he had just seen was definitely not an illusion.

“The reason why the rock pool possessed that kind of special property must have something to do with this stone talisman.....”

Lin Dong sunk deep into thought. Previously, he had personally seen a drop of light fall into the rock pool, and only this was the only evidence that could explain why the rock pool would possess such a miraculous property.

“Pah!”

As Lin Dong reasoned to himself, the noise of rubble rolling sounded out from outside the cave. Immediately, he stuffed the stone talisman into his inner garments, placing it at the spot near his chest.

“Lin Dong-ge, hee hee, I knew that you would be here.”

Just as Lin Dong managed to hide the stone talisman, like a butterfly, a figure fluttered and appeared at the entrance of the cave. The figure was revealed to be a young girl who looked to be about 13 or 14 years old, wearing simple light colored clothes. Yet these simple clothes were unable to conceal the quick wittedness on her small face. Though the girl was rather young, her small face was rather elaborate, her huge eyes glittered, making her look extremely adorable.

Gazing at the young girl, Lin Dong secretly sighed in relief. The girl was not a member of the Lin Family, rather she was adopted by Liu Yan not long after he was born. She was younger by Lin Dong by just a bit, so the two of them had grown up together and their relationship was akin to that of brother and sister, extremely intimate. As she was an orphan, she did not take on the Lin family name. Thus Liu Yan helped choose a good name for her: Qing Tan. And like her namesake, she was full of liveliness like sandalwood.

“Lin Dong-ge, the sky is almost dark, Mother has been calling you for quite a while.”

Qing Tan laughed merrily as she approached, her small hands naturally pulling at Lin Dong’s arm as she dragged him out of the cave. As she walked, she mumbled: “If the sky had gotten dark, you won’t be able to see the rock path here, don’t tell me that you planned on sleeping in the cave like before?”

Gazing beside him at Qing Tan, whose voice chirped melodiously like a lark, Lin Dong could not help laugh. Soon after, his arm moved to lightly touch his chest area. At the centre of his chest was the talisman, which was emitting a cooling sensation.

Although he did not know where this stone talisman came from, Lin Dong's intuition told him that it was definitely no ordinary thing.

As the dim light of the night shrouded the land, the cool and refreshing moonlight flowed down, washing away any remnants of heat from the day.

In the room, Lin Dong was fast asleep. Strands of moonlight sprayed from the window, some of which shined on Lin Dong's body. Suddenly, the moonlight started to ripple like water, soon after a bizarre scene occurred. The moonlight unexpectedly started to gather at Lin Dong's chest area, as if in response, the simple stone talisman emitted out a bit of light, causing it to be faintly discernable at the center of the light.

As the stone talisman shined, the originally sleeping Lin Dong slightly cracked opened his eyes. However, before he could fully open his eyes, a suddenly dizziness gushed forth from depths of his mind. Following which, he alarmingly found himself in a dark dark space.

There was no light here, only silence and cold.

This sudden change caused fear to rise up in Lin Dong's heart. No matter what, he was still a 14 year old kid.

“Snicker!”

As Lin Dong choked in fear, a sudden voice broke the silence of the pitch-black space. Soon after, a glowing figure suddenly appeared before him. Carefully examining the figure, he realized that to his surprise, the figure looked exactly like him. However, its face did not have any signs of life, rather it was expressionless like a doll.

“What is going on.....”

Lin Dong blankly gazed at the glowing figure in front of him, his brain somewhat paralyzed with fear by this weird sight.

“Pa!”

While Lin Dong was still in a daze, the glowing figure of “Lin Dong” suddenly moved. The figure’s had adjusted its body and extended both its fists, displaying a familiar fist technique with those hands.

“Is this.... Penetrating Punch?”

As he gazed at the fist technique displayed by the glowing figure, Lin Dong’s eyes opened wide in bewilderment. Soon after, a startled expression surfaced on his face as he realized that the Penetrating Punch displayed was even more elegant and refined than Lin Xiao’s!

Pa Pa Pa Pa Pa Pa Pa Pa Pa!

In the darkness, the glowing figure maneuvered swiftly as it moved its fists. Its moves were smooth and agile like a monkey, and seemed much sharper than when Lin Xiao performed it.

9 crisp echos!

Lin Dong stared in awe at the glowing figure that resembled him almost perfectly. As the figure executed Penetrating Punch, he could clearly hear 9 resounding echoes!

“9 echoes...”

Just as Lin Dong mumbled to himself, suddenly he felt a jolt of shock. Just as the glowing figure finished performing the set of fist technique, it's body jerked strangely. Immediately, a soft echo resounded from its arm!

“What...”

The sound generated was extremely soft. Only because Lin Dong was in a state of high alert within this quiet space was he able to hear that last sound.

10 echoes!

Lin Dong looked at the glowing figure in astonishment. He clearly knew that there were only supposed to be 9 echoes

generated from the Penetrating Punch, yet this glowing figure was able to generate a 10th echo?!

At this point, Lin Dong was fairly certain that even if his father personally performed the Penetrating Punch, he would not be able to generate this last echo.

“What is going on?”

Lin Dong was shocked at this sight. Moments later, he finally regained his composure and started to contemplate the situation. Even though he had only witnessed it once, Lin Dong could sense that the Penetrating Punch displayed by the glowing figure was even more natural and sharp than his father's, or perhaps, perfect.

As to why this glowing figure was able to display such unique ability, Lin Dong was clueless. Nonetheless, he understood that this time, he had found a treasure.....

As this thought crossed Lin Dong's mind, the glowing figure had yet to disappear. Instead, it once again displayed the same set of Penetrating Punch moves restarting from the beginning.

As Lin Dong stared at the agile glowing figure, he realized that the fear that plagued him at the start had unknowingly dissipated. Feeling a little lost, he decided to gather up his spirits and concentrate onto the glowing figure. With a particularly serious expression, he watched every move again and again, memorizing even the most minute details in each move.

After observing for some time, Lin Dong finally shifted into a stance. Opening up his feet, he begun to mimic the glowing figure and slowly executed the Penetrating Punch.

“Pa!”

In the darkness stood two similar figures, one human shadow and one glowing shadow, tireless repeating the same set of fist techniques. A series of crisp crackling sounds continuously echoed, though a majority of them were generated by the glowing shadow.

Nonetheless, Lin Dong did not feel discouraged. An earnest expression remained on his tiny face, as he unconsciously adjusted his moves to resemble the glowing figure.

Even though these adjustments were merely minor changes, it was akin to adding the finishing touches to a masterpiece as each tiny adjustment brought about significant effect.

“Pa! Pa! Pa! Pa!”

As he wielded his fists, Lin Dong’s movements were nimble and agile like a monkey. Suddenly, four crisps echos sounded continuously as enough force was finally generated by his fists!

4 echoes!

Both of Lin Dong’s eyes instantly brightened! He did not expect that a few minor adjustments would cause Penetrating Punch to

flow so much more smoothly.

This sensation was akin to having guidance from a legendary master. Moreover, the level of mastery attained by this mentor was a truly terrifying one.

Lin Dong was ecstatic. He had achieved such remarkable progress in just one day that even his father's jaw would drop after witnessing him produce 4 consecutive echoes. In fact, his father took nearly a month of training before he could reach this stage, yet Lin Dong managed to exceed this by more than 10 times!

After making such progress, Lin Dong's spirits were lifted. Without taking a break, he once again shifted in fight stance and repeated the Penetrating Punch moves one by one. He was determined to perfect these moves until they were exactly the same as the glowing figure's.....

As if time had stopped flowing, Lin Dong continuously imitated the glowing figure within the pitch-black space. And as his sweat dripped off his body, his fist technique came to match the glowing figure's more and more.

In the pitch-black space, a glowing shadow and a human shadow moved in unison, like a pair of lively monkeys. As their fists punched out, the sound of fists breaking through the air echoed out.

Chapter 6: Seventh Echo

“Groan...”

In the middle of his room, Lin Dong could already feel the sun’s rays shining down on his face as he struggled to open his eyes. As he glanced at the sunlight, he suddenly leaped forth from his bed. Though as his feet made contact with the floor, an extremely aching pain suddenly filled his body almost causing him to lose his footing.

“This.....”

The sudden aching sensation shocked Lin Dong. It was as if he had spent an entire night on intensive training.

“It was not a dream?!”

Suddenly, Lin Dong seemed to have recalled something as a look of awe surfaced on his face. Immediately, he gritted his teeth and positioned himself into a stance to begin practising Penetrating Fist. Looking at the proficient way he maneuvered his fists, it was as though he had already practiced these moves countless times. Only he knew that he had only just learnt this set of moves from Lin Xiao the day before.

Still in the room, the young man executed a familiar set of fist techniques with a serious expression on his face as a series of crisp echoes sounded out due to the friction between his arms and clothes.

“Pa Pa Pa Pa Pa!”

When he finally managed to produce five crisp echoes, Lin Dong’s body stopped. On his face, a mixed expression of shock, happiness and a slight tinge of fear was plastered.

“How could I have mastered it so quickly...”

Lin Dong muttered to himself as he gazed at his palms. He could feel that five echoes was definitely not his limit. In fact, if he wished to, he could easily produce seven echoes now!

This training progress bewildered Lin Dong. Among the younger generation in the Lin Family, there were several others who practised Penetrating Fist as well. Nonetheless, he was one of the rare few that could produce seven echoes at such a tender age.

“How did this happen?”

Lin Dong frowned, the eyebrows on his face knitting together. Moments later, his hand moved to his chest area and retrieved the mysterious stone talisman hidden in an inner pocket. This was the object that he retrieved from the cave yesterday.

If there were any items worthy of suspicion on Lin Dong’s body, then this stone talisman will definitely be at the top of the list.

“This object, is it really this powerful?”

As Lin Dong held the stone talisman, he felt a cooling sensation spreading out from his palm. Thanks to this sensation, the aching pain in his body was slightly soothed.

Swallowing the churning emotions in his heart, Lin Dong carefully hid the stone talisman back into the inner pocket. His intuition told him that this stone talisman possessed extraordinary powers and he knew that if news of this discovery got out, it would definitely invite a catastrophe. Therefore, it would be much better if no one else knew about it.

After he kept the stone talisman, Lin Dong opened the door and left his room. First, he proceeded to eat some breakfast prepared by Liu Yan before he slipped off back to the rock cave. Currently, his body was aching with pain, he knew that if he continued to his intensive practice now, it would definitely injure his body. Thankfully, he had discovered the miraculous properties of the rock pool, thus this was not an issue for Lin Dong.

Dripping fresh blood into the rock pool, Lin Dong enjoyed a half hour soak before he finally got out. The ache in his body had disappeared without a trace and his body had returned to its peak condition.

He felt the skin on his body, revelling at the fact that it had toughened substantially once again. This brought a smile to Lin Dong's tiny face as he knew that at this speed, he could officially advance to Tempered Body 4th Layer within the next ten days.

Climbing out of the rock pool, Lin Dong decided to execute the entire set of Penetrating Fist moves again. This time, he used all his power, holding nothing back.

“Pa Pa Pa Pa Pa Pa Pa!”

Seven echoes!

As his fist fell to indicate the end of this session, Lin Dong's tiny face flushed red with excitement. Armed with this seven echoes Penetrating Fist, he was confident that if he met Lin Shan again, it would definitely not be a repeat of their last encounter. He would not be so easily beaten without a chance to retaliate again.

Lin Dong's excitement finally faded as he once again regained his calm. Chuckling at himself, he climbed out of the cave and started his daily intensive training. Even though he now had the aid of this miraculous rock pool, Lin Dong still understood a fundamental principal.

In the journey of mastery, the self is the most important. Outside aid can certainly make smooth the path to mastery, however, how far one ventures along this path is still ultimately in their own hands.

Hence, even though he had the aid of the rock pool, Lin Dong understood that he must continue to strive and work hard. After all, that was still his greatest asset!

A day of training passed. Some time in the evening, a stern-looking Lin Xiao came around to inspect the Lin Dong's progress. With regards to Lin Dong's training, he was often extremely harsh and strict.

However, after witnessing Lin Dong produce three consecutive echoes from Penetrating Fists, even though he tried to maintain a strict expression, a slight trace of surprise and satisfaction leaked out onto his face.

Seeing the expression on his father's face, Lin Dong's secretly heaved a sigh of relief. In his mind, he chuckled to himself as he imaged what Lin Xiao's expression will be if he knew that Lin Dong could already produce seven consecutive echoes?

In the midst of the summer heat, every single member from the younger generation of Lin Family were earnestly training. They understood that the Family Competition that was coming up in six months was extremely important for them.

As the Lin Family was not an extremely powerful or reputable family, they were unable to provide every member with the best kind of treatment. Therefore, if one wants to obtain the best martial arts training and elixirs from the Lin Family, one must prove himself to be exceptional.

Therefore this Family Competition was a chance for them to showcase their talent and stand above the crowd. For most of them, this was also their first ever competition, yet on some levels,

the results of this competition determined their fates for the rest of their lives.

A man that was heavily groomed by the family will definitely progress much faster in his training as compared to training by himself. Of course, there were some special exceptions...

As everyone was intensively preparing for the upcoming Family Competition, Lin Dong did not encounter much trouble during this period. And for the next ten nights after he fell asleep, he would find a perfect “teacher” waiting for him in the dark space.

It was increasingly difficult to produce the next echo from Penetrating Fist. Especially after the seventh echo, the difficulty soared exponentially. Therefore, even after ten days of intensive training, Lin Dong was barely able to produce the ninth echo. Moreover, he was still clueless on how to produce the final tenth echo.

Nonetheless, he was not discouraged. He clearly knew that being able to produce nine echoes after just ten days of training, was already a terrifying feat.

He knew this fact from Lin Xiao’s expression when he assessed his son’s training progress. After Lin Dong showed his father six echoes, Lin Xiao’s started to look at his son with a strange gaze. When he first started training Penetrating Fist, it took him two whole months before he was able to reach this stage. Yet, Lin Dong took only ten days to match that feat. Hence, upon witnessing his remarkable progress, Lin Xiao was at a loss for words.

Moreover even as Lin Dong was drilling in Penetrating Fist, he also continued to train his Tempered Body. Thanks to the miraculous effects of the rock pool, he was able to stealthily multiply the intensity of the training regime given by Lin Xiao. Every time Lin Dong dragged his aching body into the rock pool, he would wake up refreshed and re-energized after just half an hour of soaking, ready for another round of training.

Even though his training was painful and exhausting, its effects were extremely clear. After a few days, the skin of his body had toughened to such an extent, whereby at times, he could even directly punch at rocks without injuring himself. Furthermore, when he utilized Penetrating Punch, he found that the force produced had grown by more than one and a half times!

Based on this speed, it will only be a short while before he finally reaches Tempered Body 4th Layer.....

Chapter 7: Tempered Body 4th Layer

In the cooling cave, Lin Dong relaxed in the rock pool, enjoying the mystically refreshing sensation of the liquid soaking into his body. A look of enjoyment on his tiny face.

Within the rock pool, traces of a light-red liquid gathered on Lin Dong's body as it gradually seeped through his pores, nourishing his aching muscles and strengthening his bones. Likewise, Lin Dong's body hungrily devoured the liquid, as if it were a starving ghost.

“Buzz!”

As Lin Dong lay with his eyes shut, he suddenly felt the pool water surge and an itching pain started to swarm across the underside of his skin.

This sudden itching pain caused Lin Dong to panic in response. Hastily opening his eyes, he saw that his body was shedding small bits of skin. At this sight, the panic on his face turned to joy.

Skin shedding! This was exactly what happens when one advanced to Tempered Body 4th Layer!

“I have finally reached this step...”

Lin Dong licked his lips, his heart filled with excitement. Tempered Body consisted of nine layers, the first three layers were

simple physical improvements. It was only after advancing to Tempered Body 4th Layer, could one finally gain the real benefits from training. After shedding one's skin, the new skin will become hard like rock or wood. Moreover, one's strength and resilience will be greatly enhanced, thus the Tempered Body 4th Layer is much stronger when compared to Tempered Body 3rd Layer.

Under Lin Dong's watchful gaze, the skin on his body rapidly peeled off. After all the skin had been shed, he dipped his entire body into the rock pool before jumping out. He slowly felt the new skin with his palm, finding it akin to touching smooth wood or rock, except it was a more special kind of toughness.

“Pa! Pa! Pa!...”

Suppressing his excitement, Lin Dong immediately begun to execute Penetrating Fist. The wind flowed with his moves, causing the dust on the ground to rise up. His aura was evidently incomparable to before.

With a grin on his face, Lin Dong put down his fists. He cast a glance to the rock pool and chuckled: “Thanks!”

As he laughed, Lin Dong suddenly recalled something. He frowned as he stared at the rock pool. Over the ten days of absorbing, he felt that the amount of light-red liquid inside the pool seemed to be gradually decreasing.

“Looks like the amount of light-red liquid in the pool will eventually run out.....” Lin Dong scratched his head, not the least

bit frantic at this fact. He took out a tiny and transparent bottle hidden within a pocket in his clothes. Upon a closer inspection of the bottle, two drops of red liquid were revealed to be contained within.

After carrying the stone talisman on his body for a period of time, Lin Dong managed to uncover a little secret. He realized that every five days, a little crevice on the stone talisman would be filled with a drop of red liquid. This drop of red liquid was not unfamiliar to Lin Dong, as it was the exact same liquid that he saw in the rock pool when it came into contact with his blood. However, compared to the light-red liquid in the rock pool, this drop of red liquid was clearly much more concentrated.

“It appears that the rock pool cannot hold the liquid indefinitely.” Lin Dong contemplated. If not, after all these years, the rock pool should be completely saturated with that red liquid. And should not show signs of dissipating after he had used it for a mere ten days.

“It seems that I will have top it up myself on my next visit.”

Lin Dong caressed the little bottle, a little unwilling to part with it. This liquid was extremely rare and valuable, it took a whole five days before he could obtain just a tiny drop. He had also hoped to find a chance to secretly feed a drop of this liquid to Lin Xiao. Since the liquid held miraculous effects, he believed that it would be a great help in treating Lin Xiao’s injuries.

Lin Dong softly sighed as he kept the bottle. Putting on his clothes, he slipped out of the cave and returned to his training

spot. Yet, just as he was about once again start his training, a figure suddenly rushed over from a distance away while shouting: “Lin Dong, bad news!”

“Lin Changqiang, what has happened?”

Casually muttering those words, Lin Dong cast a glance towards the figure before he lowered his head and then proceeded to resolutely lift two solid stone blocks.

The incoming person looked to be a 13 or 14 year old youth. He was a little plump, and his figure was round like a ball. The youngster’s name was Lin Changqiang, and he was the son of Lin Dong’s fifth uncle. The two of them were on pretty good terms, though Lin Dong knew that this guy had only befriended him because he actually fancied Qing Tan. Nonetheless, Lin Dong still had a decent impression of Lin Changqiang.

“Something has happened to Qing Tan.” Lin Changqiang huffed as he struggled to catch his breath.

“Thud!”

The rock blocks in Lin Dong hands fell to the ground with a thud, causing dust to scatter about. With a stern expression on his face, he questioned: “How?”

Lin Dong was very protective of his little sister. She was a very sensible girl and even though she was young, she did not display

the haughtiness usually seen by girls around her age. As such, within their house, even their usually strict father could not bear to be angry at her. Therefore, even though she had no blood relations with them, Qing Tan was undoubtedly princess in the family.

“Blast it, it must be that bastard Lin Shan!”

Lin Changqiang swore: “Today, Qing Tan found a stalk of Chiyang Grass (TN: an elixir) in the woods behind the mountain. However, she was spotted by Lin Shan and his gang, and now they are refusing to let Qing Tan go.”

“Lin Shan again!”

Upon hearing this news, a raging anger flared in Lin Dong’s eyes. He knew that Qing Tan had been going off to the woods in order to find some elixirs to aid his training. In the past, she had done so before. However, after a previously incident where she nearly injured herself while venturing for elixirs, their father had forbid her from doing so again. Nonetheless, after a peaceful period with no incidents, she had now sneaked out again.

“Take me there.” Lin Dong commanded as he dusted off the dust on his palms.

“Eh? Just you alone? Why not bring third uncle along?”

Seeing that Lin Dong wanted to leave by himself, Lin Changqiang

quickly tried to stop him. He knew that Lin Dong had been beaten unconscious by Lin Shan previously. Hence, he was afraid that this time was going to be a repeat thrashing of Lin Dong. Even though he disliked Lin Shan, he had to admit that he was a tough fellow.

“Stop dallying. If we are late, Qing Tan will definitely be bullied and I will make sure you never play with her again.” Lin Dong frowned, the third uncle mentioned by Lin Changqiang was his father Lin Xiao. However an adult intervening in matters of the younger generations will at worst result in a harsh dressing down and this was not enough to quench the anger in Lin Dong’s heart.

“Alright, you win. Follow me. Later, when Lin Shan attacks, let me help to block some of the hits. After all, I am at Tempered Body 3rd Layer so I can definitely take some blows.”

Lin Changqiang scratched his head, slightly taken aback by Lin Dong’s threat. He then proceeded to lead Lin Dong to his sister.

As he watched Lin Changqiang’s round body, Lin Dong involuntarily let out a laugh. However, in the next moment, his facial expression turned darker. Gritting his lips, he swore: “ Lin Shan, this time I am going to beat you like the dog you are!”

Chapter 8: Clash

There was a relatively vast forest in the mountains at the back of the Lin Family district. If one were lucky, one could occasionally be able to find one an elixir or two in that forest. Thus, whenever they had some time, the younger generation of the Lin Family would always come by to try their luck. As such, one could probably say that the forest was a rather popular place among the Lin Family.

At this time, there was quite a crowd at the entrance of the forest. These people were all young teenagers, clearly the younger generation of the Lin Family.

Past the human wall, a group of sturdy figures towered at the centre of the road, just happening to block off the pathway. Behind these figures was a young girl in a light colored attire.

The girl's features were like a painting and her skin was white as the freshly fallen snow. Though she was still young, her beauty was already causing many to be breathless and stunned at the sight. And at this moment, her eyes, which were normally full of life, were now angrily staring at the figures in front of her. Her tiny dirt covered hand tightly grabbed a fire-red plant which was emitting a faint fragrance.

“Lin Shan, don't be too overbearing!”

Qing Tan glared at the one particular figure at the head of the crowd, traces of anger in her normally lively voice.

“Heh heh, we had already discovered this Scarlet Sun Grass yesterday, it’s just that we waited till today to retrieve it. Yet you’ve taken what was ours, how can you still say I’m the overbearing one?” The figure at the front turned out to be a youngster who looked to be about 14 or 15 years of age. At this point, he was grinning with his arms crossed while gazing at the angry Qing Tan.

“That’s nonsense!”

Hearing Lin Shan trying to twist the facts, Qing Tan’s tiny face reddened in anger. She had spent a lot of effort to find this Scarlet Sun Grass, how could that scoundrel have found it first? And if he really did find it first like he said, how could he have possibly left it there? Could it be that he was deliberately waiting someone else to pick it?

“I’m not speaking nonsense.....”

Lin Shan gazed at Qing Tan who looked adorable even when angry. Nevertheless he was all smiles as he said: “Qing Tan, give me the Scarlet Sun Grass and I will let you go.”

“Don’t even think of it!”

Qing Tan grinded her teeth. Over this period of time, she had seen how Lin Dong had so painstakingly trained, as if his life was on the line. She also understood that if Lin Dong does not perform well in the upcoming Clan competition, not only he, but his

parents as well, will suffer a tremendous blow.

Thus, during this period, she had always come here in hopes of finding even just one elixir such that she could help Lin Dong increase his training pace. And having finally found one stalk of Scarlet Sun Grass today after much difficulty, how could she possibly hand it over to that horrible scoundrel!

“Since it’s like that, looks like you can only spend the night in this place.” Lin Shan chuckled, glancing towards Qing Tan before continuing: “Just now, that brat Lin Changqiang seemed to run away, he should have went to find Lin Dong right? Good, I’m still not satisfied from that last beating I gave him.”

At these words, Qing Tan’s tiny face changed. She knew that Lin Dong and Lin Shan usually never saw eye to eye and they would be itching to fight every time they met. However, every time they fought, Lin Dong always ended up on the short end of the stick.

“Give the Scarlet Sun Grass to me and I will not beat him, how does that sound?” Seeing Qing Tan’s tiny face change, Lin Shan laughed heartily, pleased at himself.

“You scoundrel!”

Qing Tan bit her lip, her eyes already somewhat red. At this look, many would feel somewhat sorry for her. Although Qing Tan was not a part of the Lin Family, but because she was already so beautiful and such a lively young girl, don’t even bother mentioning the Lin Family, she held the adoration of many many

youngsters. even in the entire QingShan Town.

Yet, though many in the crowd were sorry for her and felt unsatisfied at this turn of events, after some consideration, they decided not to step in or say anything. Lin Shan was a little tyrant among the younger generation of the Lin Family. Not only did he have a substantial amount of strength, but his father was also the one in charge of the Lin Family's finances. Thus no one was willing to offend him, and even if they did go and report him to the older generation, Lin Shan would at most be locked up for only one or two days. Plus, after getting out, he would definitely retaliate against the one who reported him. Therefore, among the younger generation, there were very few incidences of anyone coming into conflict with him.

“Won't you hand it over? If you don't hurry up, I'm afraid Lin Dong will arrive at any moment.....” Lin Shan taunted while deliberately acting as if he were surveying the surroundings, as if he was looking forward to Lin Dong's arrival.

“Take it!”

Tears of grievance welled up in Qing Tan's eyes, yet she stubbornly endured. Tightly gripping the Scarlet Sun Grass in her hands one last time, she gritted her teeth before fiercely throwing it towards Lin Shan.

“Heh heh, good girl.”

In response, Lin Shan gleefully stepped forward to catch the

Scarlet Sun Grass which had been flung his way. However, just as he was about to snatch the Scarlet Sun Grass out of the air, a figure suddenly broke through the crowd and heavily smashed into his body. The tremendous force straightaway caused him to roll two rounds on the ground before finally coming to a halt.

This sudden turn of events caused everyone to be shocked. Their gazes hastily turned to look at who had come before turning to ones of sympathy.

“Bastard!”

Lin Shan crawled up from the ground, not caring about the dirt all over his body, he stared at the figure who was now standing at the spot he had occupied before. A malicious intent suddenly rose up in his eyes as he sneered: “Lin Dong? Good, looks like you’ve grown some balls in the few days that we’ve not seen each other. I guess I might have let you off too lightly the last time and you’ve yet to learn your lesson.”

“Lin Shan, I’ve already given you the Scarlet Sun Grass, what else do you want?” Qing Tan said in anger as her tiny face changed upon seeing Lin Shan’s malicious look. She quickly picked up the Scarlet Sun Grass that had fallen to the ground and threw it over to Lin Shan.

“I will take the elixir and also beat him today!” Lin Shan caught the Scarlet Sun Grass, sneering.

“You!” Qing Tan’s tiny face grew hot with anger at these words.

Her small hands formed into fists, even in her wildest dreams she had never imagined that Lin Shan would be such a scoundrel.

Lin Dong also could not help but sneer at Lin Shan's rude and unreasonable conduct. Soon after, he pulled Qing Tan to one side and returned Lin Shan's words: "I will take the elixir and beat you today!"

"Haha!"

At Lin Dong's words, Lin Shan was clearly stunned though he quickly regained his wits and laughed out loud. With a mocking gaze, he looked at the former and said: "Looks like I might have hit your head a little too hard previously?"

The rest of the crowd also looked towards Lin Dong, baffled. Though it was good to be strong-willed, if one oversteps his boundaries, one would be asking for punishment. The two had fought many times before, but every single time it always ended up in Lin Dong being beaten black and blue.

"Lin Dong-ge, don't fight with him, we don't need that Scarlet Sun Grass." Seeing that Lin Dong wanted to clash against Lin Shan yet again, Qing Tan quickly pulled him back, a trace of worry in her voice.

"Yeah, Lin Dong, a true man knows better than to fight when the odds are stacked against him. Go back and train for a while longer before you come back and teach this bastard a lesson." Lin Changqiang who had followed closely behind Lin Dong promptly

opened his mouth to advise the latter.

“Want to leave? It’s not that easy!”

Lin Shan sneered, in the next instant his figure dashed forward. In a few steps, he appeared before Lin Dong, his five fingers quickly gripping into a fist which flew towards the latter’s chest as it faintly emitted the sound of rushing wind.

“Pa!”

Lin Dong gazed at Lin Shan’s fully powered fist, the corners of his mouth turning upwards into a sneer. Yet he did not duck nor dodge, instead his palm reached out and smashed into Lin Shan’s fist, causing the crowd’s gazes to turn to that of astonishment.

As fist met palm, a loud noise like that of rocks smashing together sounded out. However, what amazed the crowd was the fact that Lin Dong had actually managed to receive Lin Shan’s punch!

“Tempered Body 4th Layer?!”

After that exchange, Lin Shan could sense that something was not right, his opponent’s skin felt as though it was at least as hard as his!

Such a tough skin clearly belonged to someone who had reached the Tempered Body 4th Layer!

“How is this possible? This brat was only at the 2nd Layer half a month ago, how could he have suddenly rose to the 4th Layer?!” Lin Shan could not believe it, yet he clenched his jaw, even if you have reached the Tempered Body 4th Layer, don’t even think of fighting with me!

“Falling Rock Fist!”

Lin Shan withdrew his fist and suddenly let out a shout. On his arm, blue veins started to pop out, quickly extending all over his arm. Soon after, multiple images of fists appeared, like rocks, they smashed ferociously towards Lin Dong’s head. That kind of power was akin to the rocks flying out from an explosion.

“Lower Category Level 1 Martial Arts, Falling Rock Fist? To think that Lin Shan has also started learning Martial Arts, Lin Dong is really unlucky.” The crowd was in an uproar after seeing Lin Dong’s current situation.

Lin Dong’s gaze fixed itself on the multiple incoming fist images. Although Lin Shan’s Falling Rock Fist was not weak, he wondered why it appeared so full of flaws and mistakes in his eyes. Without hesitation, Lin Dong straightaway executed Penetrating Fist.

“Pa! Pa! Pa!”

The sleeves of his clothes slapped against his arm, causing a crisp and loud sound to echo out. At the same time, Lin Dong’s fist collided against Lin Shan’s fist images.

“Thump!”

Just as their fists touched together, Lin Shan’s body shuddered as a huge force rapidly rushed forth from his fist. After which, to his shock and amazement, waves of pain transmitted from both his rock hard fists.

“Penetrating Fist, three echoes? How is this possible?!”

At this very moment, Lin Shan’s eyes were thick with shock. Naturally, he had heard of Penetrating Fist, it was very well known among the Level 1 Martial Arts. He had originally planned on learning this Fist Technique, yet he was still unable to produce an echo even after ten days of training. Thus he had no option but to give up. Who could imagine that Lin Dong who was previously never a match for him would actually be capable of such success?!”

“It’s not three echoes, its four!”

Lin Dong icily smiled, his arm jerked as another crisp sound echoed out. Following which, an increasingly heavy punch struck against both of Lin Shan’s fists.

“Thud!”

Faced with a four echo Penetrating Fist, Lin Shan’s Falling Rock Fist stance fell apart. Step by step, he staggered backwards before finally falling, to the amazement of the crowd of onlookers.

Yet, just as Lin Shan was about to fall, an arm suddenly reached out to grab his shoulder. With a gentle push, Lin Shan was stabilized.

“Ge!”

Lin Shan quickly turned his head to gaze at the figure who had appeared at his back, suddenly extremely happy. The surrounding crowd’s expressions also changed as fear flashed across their eyes.

Chapter 9: Lin Hong

Gazing at the figure behind Lin Shan, Qing Tan and Lin Changqiang's expressions changed as a look of worry surfaced in their eyes.

Lin Dong face was stretched taut, as he similarly cast his gaze behind Lin Shan. A youngster clothed in white was holding onto Lin Shan's shoulder, steadying him and preventing him from falling to the ground.

The youngster looked to be around 15 or 16 years old and he had rather handsome facial features. A small smile was on his face, yet in Lin Dong's eyes, this smile appeared slightly cold.

Lin Hong. Lin Shan's elder brother and a fairly outstanding member of the Lin Family. He was only 15 years old, yet he had long ago reached Tempered Body 5th Layer. At this stage, he needed only one more step before he will be able to cultivate a Yuan Power Seed. After which, he would definitely be ranked top three among all of the younger generation in the Lin Family.

“Ge!” Although Lin Shan was extremely overbearing towards others, he became as meek as a sheep in front of the seemingly gentle-natured Lin Hong.

“With just this level of skill, why do you go out and embarrass yourself, instead of practising properly?” Lin Hong chuckled as he loosened his grip.

“It was only because I was careless... If we fought again, there’s nothing for me to fear!” Lin Shan’s face flushed red with embarrassment at Lin Hong’s words. Yet Lin Shan’s retort seemed a bit forced, as it was clear that Lin Dong’s punch was indeed very powerful.

“Four echo Penetrating Fist is not something you are capable of blocking.” Lin Hong’s gaze turned towards Lin Dong, scrutinizing the latter for a while before saying: “Lin Dong-biao-di, looks like you’ve been hiding this for quite some time.....”

Lin Hong also knew about the difficulty in practising Penetrating Fist. No matter what, in order to train till the 4th echo required months of effort. Yet prior to this incident, he had never heard that Lin Dong even knew this martial art.

“It’s just trickery, hardly worthy of Lin Hong-biao-ge’s attention.”

The corners of Lin Dong’s mouth pulled into a wry smile as he replied. Perhaps because of the feud between their fathers, even if you put it nicely, Lin Hong and his brother had a strained relationship with Lin Dong. Likewise, Lin Dong harboured no good will towards them.

Though Lin Hong seemed polite and friendly on the surface, Lin Dong knew that compared to the menacing Lin Shan, his brother was actually much more fiendish. The reason why Lin Shan could be a little tyrant within the younger generation in the Lin Family, was not only due to his father but also Lin Hong, who had quite a far reaching influence himself.

Of course, most importantly, Lin Dong had heard from Lin Xiao that half a year ago, Lin Hong had actually asked to be engaged to Qing Tan. Thankfully, this request had been flatly rejected by Lin Xiao.

This matter had further deepened the enmity between both parties.

“Lin Dong-ge, lets leave first.”

Qing Tan stealthily tugged on Lin Dong’s sleeve as she whispered. Though she was extremely surprised that Lin Dong had managed to defeat Lin Shan, Lin Hong stood heads and shoulders above Lin Shan in regards to both martial arts and wit. He was definitely not someone to mess with.

“Heh heh, Qing Tan, it’s been so long since we’ve met.” Lin Hong chuckled as he turned his gaze to Qing Tan with a strange lustre in his eyes. Although Qing Tan was young, she was a blooming beauty. Among the younger generation in Qingyang Town, many secretly admired her and naturally, he was no exception.

“Lin Shan has always been such an impulsive brat. However, if you need any elixirs, you just need to approach me. A grade one elixir like the Scarlet Sun Grass is after all a little lacking in quality.”

Hearing Lin Hong talk to her as if they were on familiar terms, Qing Tan’s crescent shaped eyebrows tightly knitted together.

However, due to the other party's strength, although she was not too pleased about it, she chose not to talk back.

“Dammit, this guy is so repulsive, I will definitely beat him to death in the future.” Lin Changqiang muttered behind Lin Dong's back as he was also extremely disgusted by Lin Hong's words.

“Much thanks to Lin Hong-biao-ge's goodwill, however we'd rather depend on ourselves. It's not easy for the family to earn money so it's only right that we try our best to save even a little of it.” Lin Dong smiled, ignoring the mutterings of Lin Changqiang. If he saw Lin Hong in the past, he could only hope to retreat before anything happened. Yet it was different now, as he possessed the secret Stone Talisman, he knew that surpassing Lin Hong was only a matter of time.

“Oh? Lin Dong-biao-di's unyielding character is exactly the same as his father's. Indeed worthy of his legacy!” Though Lin Hong was smiling, anyone who heard his words could tell that they held a hint of ridicule.

Anger flashed across Lin Dong's eyes as he heard these mocking words.

“Heh heh, since the Scarlet Sun Grass was found by Qing Tan, then it must be returned. Fret not Qing Tan, after all this, I will definitely help you teach this rude fellow a lesson.” Lin Hong took the Scarlet Sun Grass off Lin Shan's hands and then waved it at Qing Tan while smiling.

Seeing his actions, Qing Tan pursed her tiny lips, not daring to move forward to retrieve the Scarlet Sun Grass. She was worried that Lin Hong may seize this opportunity to create trouble for Lin Dong in the future. If so, she would rather give up this Scarlet Sun Grass.

In response, the corners of Lin Hong's mouth could not help but slightly raise.

“Seems like Lin Hong-biao-ge is truly a magnanimous individual.”

Yet, before a smile could form on his face, Lin Dong interrupted it with a laugh. After which, under the watchful gaze of the crowd, Lin Dong stepped forward and approached Lin Hong as he unapologetically stretched out his hand to grab the Scarlet Sun Grass.

Lin Dong's sudden actions caused Lin Hong's face to turn rigid. The latter stared straight at the former with an icy look in his eyes. Lin Dong's actions in front of the crowd had hurt Lin Hong's pride.

However, Lin Dong turned a blind eye to Lin Hong's stare as he attempted to exert more force to snatch the Scarlet Sun Grass. Nevertheless, he found that Lin Hong's hand continued to hold onto the Scarlet Sun Grass like a pair of metal pincers. At once, Lin Dong smiled and asked: “So...? Does Lin Hong-biao-ge suddenly fancy this Scarlet Sun Grass now?”

Upon hearing these words, the corners of Lin Hong's eyes

twitched as he slowly released his grip. Staring daggers at Lin Dong, he laughed and said: “Lin Dong-biao-di, I am also interested in your Penetrating Fist, would you be willing to engage in a light duel with me?”

Without waiting for Lin Dong’s reply, Lin Hong suddenly took a step forward as his palm flew towards Lin Dong’s chest. The gust that followed was much stronger than before when Lin Shan attacked.

Seeing as Lin Hong launched his attack as soon as he spoke, Lin Dong’s facial expression darkened as he swiftly raised both of his arms in front of his chest, to protect his vital organs.

“Thud!”

As they exchanged blows, Lin Dong immediately felt a vigorous force and sharp pain ricocheting through his arm, forcing him to move ten steps back. Thankfully his foundations were solid, thus he did not end up convulsing on the ground.

“Yuan Power? Tempered Body 6th Layer?!”

Steadying his body, Lin Dong muttered as he stared at Lin Hong. He had clearly seen an extremely weak light engulfing the latter’s fist. That was obviously the effects of Yuan Power!

This means that Lin Hong had actually entered the realm of Tempered Body 6th Layer and a Yuan Power Seed had been born in

his body!

Lin Hong shot a glance at Lin Dong, his brows knitting together. The fact that he had unexpectedly failed to defeat the latter in one move did not sit well with him. Yet, he remained confident that he could defeat Lin Dong within five moves. This was the confidence that he had in himself, who had achieved Tempered Body 6th Layer.

“Lin Dong-biao-di is indeed skillful, come again!”

The dangerous glint in his eyes hinted that Lin Hong did not plan to let Lin Dong off so easily. With a quick laugh, he once again rushed towards the latter. This time however, many in the crowd gasped in response as they could clearly see that on his body was shrouded in an extremely weak light.

As he stared at that formidable Lin Hong, the rage in Lin Dong's eyes intensified. He gritted his teeth as he prepared to launch an all-out counter with his Penetrating Fist. Yet before they clashed again, an angry voice suddenly shouted out.

“Both of you stop right now!”

Lin Hong's footsteps immediately halted as the voice filled his ears. As he turned to look, he saw a young lady walking out from the crowd, red hot anger on her beautiful face.

The young lady was clothed in red, and she looked approximately

seventeen to eighteen years old. She was slightly older and bigger than the rest, and her facial features could be considered beautiful. As her brown ponytail hung down to her slim waist, her slightly vertical eye brows gave her a heroic spirit that would not lose out to any man.

“It’s Lin Xia-jie!”

Upon witnessing the said lady, the surrounding crowd erupted.

“Oh, looks like its Lin Xia-jie.” Lin Hong smiled at the lady clothed in red.

“Lin Hong, since we are all from the Lin Family, do you really need to use Yuan Power during a duel?” Lin Xia replied, frowning as she surveyed at the crowd.

“We were just playing. Since Lin Xiao-jie has spoken, we are naturally all good now.” Lin Hong casually muttered.

At this instance, Lin Dong also withdrew his fists as he politely greeted Lin Xia-jie. This lady was the daughter of their first uncle, and even though she was female, she was the most outstanding individual among the younger generation in the Lin Family. In fact, it was rumoured that she had already advanced to Tempered Body 6th Layer half a year ago, and right now no one knew just how far she had grown since.

Lin Xia’s reputation could be considered pretty good, even among

the younger generation in Qingyang Town. Hence, in the Lin Family, she held quite a high status, and even Lin Hong did not dare to offend her.

“What is the point of fighting against your own brothers from the same family? If you are really capable, when the Qingyang Town Hunt begins, you ought to compete with the younger generation in other families. Only if you win, then can you be considered as skilled.” Lin Xia retorted. Like a female gang leader, her words carried some weight.

“Lin Xia-jie is right.”

Lin Hong lazily replied. He approached Lin Dong with the Scarlet Sun Grass in hand and threw the elixir towards the latter. Promptly using a soft tone that could only be heard between two, he lightly muttered: “I will enter the top three in the Family Competition coming up in six months. After that, I will ask Grandpa to allow me to be engaged to Qing Tan. In the mean time, please take good care my future bride.”

As he finished, he patted Lin Dong’s shoulder as though they were already brother-in-laws, before he turned around with a smile on his face, and left with Lin Shan.

As Lin Dong stared at Lin Hong’s back, he slowly tightened his fists into balls as an icy look flashed across his eyes. He will definitely stop this bastard from marrying Qing Tan!

“Want to be top three, it’s not that easy!”

Even though Lin Hong's abilities were vastly superior to his, Lin Dong remained confident that with the help of the stone talisman and his own hard-work, he would definitely catch up with Lin Hong before the Family Competition!

Chapter 10: Golden Jade Branch

Lin Xia watched Ling Hong and his brother leave before walking over to Lin Dong, a smiling on her face: “Lin Dong biao-di, are you alright?”

“Yes, thank you Lin Xia-jie.” Lin Dong nodded in acknowledgement. Lin Xia and her father had always been good to him since young. Hence, their relationship was considered pretty good and it was only because Lin Xia has been busy with training these past few years that their interactions had decreased compared to before.

“I just witnessed your duel with Lin Shan, I’m guessing you’ve reached Tempered Body 4th Layer?” Lin Xia asked, surprised. She knew that Lin Dong’s had only been training for less than a year, yet he had already reached 4th Layer. Truly an astonishing pace.

“It’s just a fluke.” It was not easy to hide the fact that he had reached Tempered Body 4th Layer. After all it’s effects were showcased at the outermost layer of one’s body. Hence, Lin Dong did not bother to conceal it, nodding his head in response to Lin Xia’s question.

“Looks like you’ve inherited your father’s talent.” Lin Xiao grinned, her expression turning serious: “ However the current you is still way behind Lin Hong. According to my knowledge, he had already progressed to Tempered Body 6th Layer three months ago, and birthed a Yuan Power Seed within his body. Hence, it is best for you to avoid fighting with him or you will surely lose out.”

“Yes, I know.” Lin Dong did not try to put on a brave front. Based on his current abilities, he knew that he was still outclassed by Lin Hong. Nonetheless, he remained confident that he will definitely surpass the latter!

“Hehe, alright, keep up the good work, I will be heading back now. Remember to work hard for the upcoming Family Competition, you know how much your father cares about that event.” Lin Xiao smiled as she patted Lin Dong’s head. Then, after she greeted Qing Tan and Lin Changqiang, she swung her ponytail and walked away suavely.

“Hehe, Lin Xia-jie is really cool, even Lin Hong had to back down in front of her. You know, Grandpa really adores her, and sometimes he even teaches her martial arts personally.” Lin Changqiang enviously said, as he watched Lin Xia’s slender figure walking away.

“You are just lazy.” Lin Dong rolled his eyes at Lin Changqiang. Without further ado, he immediately signalled to Qing Tan and turned to leave. Lin Changqiang followed them for a short distance, but as he saw the darkening sky, he somewhat reluctantly left the two.

“Lin Dong-ge, I am so sorry. I promise not to sneak off to find elixirs again...” Qing Tan pitifully cried, as she tugged at Lin Dong’s sleeve on their journey home.

“It’s fine. Once I become stronger, no one will dare to bully you ever again.” Even though Lin Dong had initially planned to scold her, her pitiful face was like bucket of cold water over the flames of

rage in his heart. He helplessly shook his head, before slapping his chest as he replied with a laugh.

“I want to train too!” Qing Tan suddenly said, as she lifted her cute nose.

“Weren’t you afraid that training would make you ugly?” Lin Dong jokingly asked.

“No way, look at how beautiful Lin Xia-jie is. If I could become like her, then Lin Hong will never again dare to bully Lin Dong-ge anymore”. Qing Tan replied cutely as she stuck out her little pink tongue.

Lin Dong smiled as he shook his head, his finger moving to flick Qing Tan’s forehead. He then told her: “When we return home, do not tell anyone about what happened today. Do you understand?”

“Ookkk...” Qing Tan childishly dragged out her reply, as she a frown formed on her tiny face.

Although Lin Dong had reminded Qing Tan not to mention anything, in the end, he was unsuccessful in concealing the day’s event.

“You fought with the Lin Shan and his brother this afternoon.” Lin Xiao casually remarked during dinner as he laid down the chopsticks in his hand.

Upon hearing these words, Lin Dong and Qing Tan immediately felt their bodies tense up. Liu Yan, who was also present, also helplessly shook her head as she gave a disapproving look to the two of them.

“Father, this has nothing to do with Lin Dong-ge. Its all my fault...” Qing Tan timidly said.

Lin Xiao glanced at the two of them, his facial expression steady. He kept his eyes glued onto Lin Dong as he asked: “ I heard that you defeated Lin Shan?”

Lin Dong scratched his head, wryly smiling as he nodded.

“Give your hand to me”. At Lin Dong’s acknowledgment, Lin Xiao’s eyes flashed as he stretched out his wide palm and gripped the latter’s arm. Gently tapping the arm, a smile surfaced on his usually stoic face : ”Tempered Body 4th Layer?”

“Yes.” Lin Dong once again nodded.

“Haha, excellent!” Upon receiving Lin Dong’s confirmation, Lin Xiao finally let a out hearty laughter, filled with joy and contentment.

As he watched Lin Xiao laugh so heartily, Lin Dong’s heart finally heaved a sigh of relieve. It looks like he won’t be scolded after all...

Liu Yan could not help but purse her lips into a smile when she

saw Lin Xiao's heartfelt smile. Looking at Lin Dong with dotting eyes, she understood that Lin Xiao had invested everything he had into Lin Dong. He had always blamed himself for causing the loss of a genius in the Lin Family and destroying their hopes. Therefore, due to his stubborn nature, he had always hoped to 'return' a genius back to the Lin Family and that genius he had hoped to 'return' was naturally Lin Dong.

“Correct me if i'm wrong but you had only just reached Tempered Body 3rd Layer ten days ago right? How did you progress this quickly?” Even though he was ecstatic, Lin Xiao had his suspicions. To progress from 3rd to 4th Layer in ten days time was an extremely rapid pace. How did a Lin Dong without the aid of any elixirs manage to accomplish this?

“I'm not too sure either.....ever since I ate the Red Gingseng, my training progress feels much smoother than before.” Lin Dong's heart skipped a beat upon hearing Lin Xiao's queries. After a slight hesitation, he eventually decided to tell a little lie. Somehow, he always felt that it would be best not to reveal the secret of the stone talisman, or else there would be a major calamity heading his way.

“Oh?” Lin Xiao frowned upon hearing Lin Dong's reply. The Red Ginseng is merely a Grade 1 elixir, how could it be so potent?

“Maybe Dong-er's body has a special affinity with elixirs and can absorb their effects more effectively? I have heard that some people are blessed this unique gift and their bodies are able to absorb elixirs more effectively than most people.” Liu Yan offered a possible explanation as she smiled.

“True, it might be because of that.” Lin Xiao nodded his head in agreement, he had also heard of similar cases before. If Lin Dong truly possessed this miraculous body constitution, it would not be impossible for him to train at this breakneck speed.

“Looks like I have been neglectful in the past, if Dong-er really possesses this gift, it will not be difficult for him to achieve a good result in the Family Competition.” Lin Xiao smiled in contentment as he reached into his garments. Carefully taking out a bundle wrapped in a roll of cloth, he gently placed it on top of the table. As he spread opened the cloth, a fragrance instantly spread out across the room and a light-golden branch appeared before their eyes.

The branch was coloured gold, and within that golden glow a light green liquid gently flowed through, similar to a chalcedony.

“This is.....a Grade 2 elixir, Golden Jade Branch?” Liu Yan gasped as she saw the golden branch.

“Is this what a Grade 2 elixir looks like?” Lin Dong peeked at the golden branch out of curiosity, the corners of his mouth pulling downwards. Even though it looked out of the ordinary, the amount of Ling Qi contained within was lackluster compared to the mysterious liquid that came from the stone talisman.

“Heh heh, I had the good fortune of coming upon this elixir in the mountains yesterday. Liu Yan, boil this elixir for Dong-er tomorrow.” Lin Xiao smiled as he said. Yet soon after, his face turned slightly pale as he violently coughed twice.

“Father, I do not need this. Please keep it for your own injuries.” Lin Dong hastily replied.

“No worries. I merely expended a bit of energy to deal with a troublesome beast yesterday when I was acquiring this elixir. It’s no big deal. After all, I have lived with my injuries all these years, these elixirs will hardly be able to make a difference for me.” Lin Xiao said, as he waved his hand from side to side. “Besides, in a few months time, it will be the Family Competition. During this period, you should focus on your training. Do not worry about the elixirs, let father handle this problem.”

Lin Dong’s eyes reddened, as he saw the happy expression on Lin Xiao’s usually stern face. Without a word, he lightly nodded his head as he muttered to himself: “Father, do not worry. I will not disappoint you.”

“It’s late, get some rest. You still have training tomorrow”. Lin Xiao waved his hand, beckoning Lin Dong to go and rest.

“Yes.”

After Lin Dong replied, he and Qing Tan left the dinner table and walked to their rooms. Even as they left the room, they could still hear Lin Xiao’s hearty laughter. This laughter was something they had not heard in a long time.....

As he gently clenched his fist, Lin Dong turned his head and indicated for Qing Tan to return to her room to rest. Yet, he

suddenly saw her beautifully sculpted face turn pale as threads of white and cold air gradually seeped out of her body, causing frost to grow on the surrounding ground.

“Oh no.....the chilling cold has flared up again!”

Upon witnessing this abrupt development in Qing Tan, Lin Dong's expression also changed.

Chapter 11: Yin Pearl

“Qing Tan, has the chilling cold flared up again?”

As he felt waves of chilling cold emit from Qing Tan’s body, Lin Dong could not help but shiver as he anxiously asked.

“Yes.” Qing Tan squeezed out an answer through clenched teeth. Her frail body constantly shivered from the cold, a look of suffering on her tiny face.

“I’ll go and call father!” Lin Dong quickly said.

“No, please don’t go!” Upon hearing those words, Qing Tan swiftly grabbed on to Lin Dong’s sleeve. Immediately, the chilling air swiftly formed a thin layer of frost on his sleeve. “It’s no use. Besides, its rare to see Father in such a good mood. Please do not trouble him, I can endure this.”

As he looked at Qing Tan’s tiny yet deathly white face, Lin Dong felt a growing ache in his heart. Gritting his teeth, he finally nodded. He knew that Qing Tan was right, even if he called father over, it would be of little use and will instead only increase the number of worried people to two.

Qing Tan had frequently suffered from this chilling cold since young. After a certain period of time, an extremely dense chilling air will explode from within her body. Under the effects of this chill, her insides will be tormented by extreme pain. Over these past ten years, she has suffered immensely due to this chilling cold.

However, even Lin Xiao could not find any solution to alleviate her condition. He once tried to use Yuan Force to forcefully expel the chilling cold, but in the end, he had to spend nearly half a month in bed in order to remove the chilling cold that entered his body.

Therefore, every time the chilling cold flared up in Qing Tan's body, the three of them could only helplessly watch as Qing Tan suffered while their hearts were cut to pieces on the inside.

“Let me carry you back to your room.” Observing that Qing Tan was paralyzed with pain, he suddenly lifted her up, hugging her tightly in his arms, and ran like a mad man towards her room.

“Hsss hss!”

As he dashed into the room, Lin Dong swiftly placed Qing Tan on her bed. Then, he hastily rubbed his arms, which had turned numb from the chilling cold and felt as though they were being pierced by needles.

“Lin Dong-ge, you.....you should return first. I can endure this.” Qing Tan hid her frail body under the blanket as she feebly mumbled. However, as she spoke, her body started to tremble even more violently. It seems that the chilling cold was even more intense compared to previous times.

“So cold.....so cold.....”

Qing Tan popped her little head out of the blanket, her tiny face

white as sheet and her hair glittering with ice crystals.

Upon witnessing this scene, Lin Dong, who was standing beside her, became extremely anxious and agitated as he paced up and down her bedside. Suddenly, his footsteps stopped. Clenching his teeth, he tore off his shoes and jumped onto her bed before proceeding to hug Qing Tan tightly through her blanket.

People who train possess a strong and vigorous life-force. Lin Dong hoped to use his body warmth to alleviate some of Qing Tan's pain. Even though he understood that his actions would hardly amount to anything, he could not bear to watch Qing Tan being tortured by the chilling cold all by herself.

“Lin Dong-ge, please don't!”

Qing Tan hurriedly replied as she felt Lin Dong's embrace. Even though Qing Tan was nearly unconscious from the chilling cold, Lin Dong's movement caused her to regain some of her senses. She clearly knew how potent the chilling cold in her body was, as even Lin Xiao, who was at Earthly Yuan level, had a difficult time dealing with it. How could Lin Dong, who was merely at Tempered Body 4th Layer, handle it?

“Be good, I'll be fine.....” Clenching his jaw, Lin Dong tenaciously held on to Qing Tan tightly. Even though they were separated by the blanket, he felt as though he were hugging a piece of millennial ice. The bone piercing chill was akin to thousands of razor-sharp needles relentlessly stabbing into his body.

Needless to say, moments later, Lin Dong's body began to shiver as well. Frost appeared on his eyebrows as his teeth chattered nonstop. Nonetheless, despite the pain, Lin Dong's grip only grew tighter.

Qing Tan rested her tiny head on Lin Dong's chest, her eyes gazing at the constantly shivering Lin Dong, who was now biting his lips as he endured the cold. Tears began to flow as she felt a faint warmth blossom from the depths of her heart. She knew that she was only an orphan, yet Lin Dong and his family had always treated her like one of their own.

"Thank you, Lin Dong-ge". Qing Tan lightly mumbled as she slowly lost consciousness, her eyelids slowly falling in response.

As the layer of frost on Lin Dong's body grew thicker, his consciousness began to fade as well. Suddenly, moments before he was about to faint, a strange suction force arose from his chest area. Soon, he felt the relentlessly chilling cold in his body gradually sucked away by this force.

The bone-chilling cold swiftly left his body and Lin Dong slowly began to regain consciousness. As he stared at the melting frost on his arm, he was dazed for a second before he hurriedly opened his shirt. There, lay the stone talisman that he had kept close on his body, emitting a light glow. At the same time, he could also vaguely feel a cooling sensation coming from it.

"The stone talisman sucked up the chilling cold?" Lin Dong blinked as a disbelieving smile surfaced on his face. He did not expect that this chilling cold, which had even stumped father,

could actually be sucked away by this stone talisman!

While Lin Dong was still in awe at this turn of events, Qing Tan, who had originally fainted, let out a soft cry. Her eyes slowly opened, immediately detecting the changes in her body and exclaiming: “The chilling cold has subsided?”

“Seems like it.” Lin Dong replied with a smile, as he scratched his head. Then, he let go of Qing Tan and said: “Now that it has subsided, it’s all good. Get some rest.”

“Yes, Lin Dong-ge, thank you.” Qing Tan softly muttered, her cheeks turning a light pink as she looked at Lin Dong’s smiling face.

“We’re family, there’s no need for you to say these words.” Lin Dong patted his chest, smiling as he said in a manly manner. Seeing that it was late, he decided not to linger any further and waved goodbye to Qing Tan before turning to walk out of her room.

Gazing at Lin Dong’s leaving figure, Qing Tan looked like a little belle as she laid on her bed, her languid self appearing somewhat charming and lovely. Her cheek rested on her tiny hands and her little feet, which were as white as jade, slowly swayed over her back. On her lips, a sweet smile hung, brightening her angelic face.

After leaving Qing Tan’s room, Lin Dong rushed to his room at lightning speed. He quickly locked his door before taking out the stone talisman that was tucked near his chest. Under the lights,

three milky white bean-sized crystals appeared from the small crevice in the middle of the stone talisman.

Lin Dong carefully removed the three milky-white bean-sized crystals. As they rolled onto the palm of his hand, he felt a cooling sensation which reached into the very marrow of his bones. The chilling cold within these pearls was almost the same as the chilling cold within Qing Tan's body, except the chill from the crystals seemed much more gentle.

“This should have been condensed from the chilling cold that was sucked out from Qing Tan's body.....”

Lin Dong muttered as he closed his fingers on the three white pearls, gripping them in his hand. The Yin Energy contained within these pearls did not have the violent nature of the one observed in Qing Tan's body. In fact, it could even be possible for one to absorb the Yin Energy from the pearls into one's body.

Although he was far from reaching the Earthly Yuan level, Lin Dong knew that after advancing to Earthly Yuan level, the most vital step was to absorb Yin Energy, that existed between Heaven and Earth, into one's body. After which, the Yin Energy will merge with the Yuan Power that lies in one's body, greatly enhancing the attacking potential of one's Yuan Power. Subsequently, when one advances to Heavenly Yuan level, one must absorb the Yang Energy, that exists between Heaven and Earth, into one's body. Eventually, when the Yin and Yang Energy within one's body synergizes, a Yuan Dan will be formed.

Hence, this way of training was termed as 'Stealing Yin and

Yang’.

Thus for the Earth Yuan and Heavenly Yuan stages, Yin and Yang Energy could be considered the most important components. However, within Heaven and Earth, Yin and Yang Energy can be classified into different grades and categories, with each possessing their own advantages and disadvantages. Most people would however, choose to absorb Yin Yang energy directly from Heaven and Earth because it was the most convenient method. After all, special Yin Yang Energy is not so easily chanced upon. Naturally though, this method would result in them being slightly weaker.

Of course, some wealthy people would rather choose to absorb special Yin Yang Energy. This way, they will end up distinctly stronger than a practitioner on the same level as them.

Besides, the higher the quality of Yin Yang Energy absorbed during the Earthly and Heavenly Yuan stages, the stronger the Yuan Dan formed will be!

Thus, some wealthier people will expend vast resources in order to find various kinds of special Yin Yang Energy to allow their Yuan Dan formed to be of a higher quality.

Obviously, though Lin Dong had never come into contact with Yin Energy before, he was very certain that the white Yin Pearl in his hand was definitely much higher in quality than the natural Yin Energy found between Heaven and Earth.

Perhaps, the Yin Energy contained within can be classified as 3rd

Grade or even higher.

And to expert practitioners at Earthly Yuan level, these are highly prized treasures one would kill to obtain!

Chapter 12: The Tenth Echo

“These Yin Pearls could be secretly given to Father for his usage...”

As Lin Dong licked his lips, a fire lit up in his eyes as he gazed intensely at the three Yin Pearls in his palm. Since Lin Xiao had fallen to Earthly Yuan level, if he could absorb the Yin Energy in these pearls, his strength would definitely be greatly enhanced.

However, treating Lin Xiao’s internal injuries still took priority because, the longer it dragged on, the worse it became for him.

“Sometime in the next few days, I will find an opportunity to feed Father the red-liquid from the stone talisman. Lets see if it will help to heal the injuries in his body.”

The current Lin Xiao suffered from grave internal injuries. After so many years of dragging himself around even with these injuries, a tremendous amount of damage had been done to his body. If these injuries are not treated, Lin Xiao will likely be unable to safely absorb the Yin Energy in these pearls.

“If Father can recover his previous strength, our status within the Lin Family will be immediately reinstated. After all, even after all these years, only three people from the Lin Family have advanced to Heavenly Yuan level.”

Even within Qingyang Town, those who reached Heavenly Yuan level could be considered as elite practitioners. In this town, the

strength of one's faction largely depends on the number of Heavenly Yuan users that they have. Therefore, if Lin Xiao was able to recover his Heavenly Yuan strength, not only will his position be restored, but any impediment towards his progress should disappear as well. This was a future that Lin Dong, Liu Yan and Qing Tan had long dreamed of.

As he imagined Lin Xiao's recover his majestic figure of the past, Lin Dong involuntarily let out a little chuckle. Then, he proceeded to look for a tiny bottle in his room and very carefully placed the three Yin Pearls inside. He knew that if he wanted to, he could probably exchange these items for Grade 3 elixirs as they were quite valuable.

After he finished, Lin Dong finally heaved a sigh of relief. Suddenly, an aching sensation emerged from his body. Even though the stone talisman had helped to suck out the chilling cold from Qing Tan's body, his body was still affected by the Yin-nature chill.

“Has the chilling cold entered my body?”

The aching sensation in his body caused Lin Dong's complexion to change. Moments later, he felt as though the aching sensation had stuck itself to the marrow in his bones. It felt as if something was attempting to drill it's way into his bones.

“Bone refining?”

At this sudden realization, Lin Dong's eyelids blinked rapidly.

Bone refining was a key step to achieving Tempered Body 5th Layer, which would greatly enhance the toughness of one's bones, resulting in an enormous upgrade in both power and speed. However, Lin Dong had only just advanced to Tempered Body 4th Layer. Based on his calculations, even if he had the aid of the liquid from the stone talisman, it would take up to ten days before he should reach this step. How did it appear now?

“It must be due to the chilling cold within Qing Tan's body!”

After pondering for a while, Lin Dong finally guessed the answer to his question. Instantly a look of amazement surfaced on his face. Did the chilling cold in Qing Tan's body really have such a miraculous effect on Tempered Body practitioners?

“The chilling cold in Qing Tan's body was too savage. The stone talisman must have filtered out all of the savageness and left only the beneficial parts in my body.” Lin Dong frowned as he recalled that even Lin Xiao, who was at Earthly Yuan level, had a devastating time dealing with the chilling cold and had to recuperate for half a month. Therefore, compared to himself who was only at Tempered Body 4th Layer, his ability to handle the chilling cold would be a joke. In the end, it was mostly because of the help from the stone talisman.

“I did not expect the chilling cold in Qing Tan's body to possess this kind of effect. However, it will still be a while before the chilling cold flares up again...”

Upon muttering these words, Lin Dong hastily spat in disgust. Every time the chilling cold flared up, it caused Qing Tan an

immense suffering. If this is the price to pay for these Yin Pearls, Lin Dong would rather not have them.

As he quickly suppressed this horrible idea, Lin Dong stretched his body and then laid down on his bed. His eyes gradually closed, while the stone talisman on his chest once again emitted a faint glow.

Over this period of time, Lin Dong had gained a better understanding of the stone talisman. He now knew that the dark space that he had found himself in could be considered as a spiritual domain where his physical body could not enter. Nonetheless, every thing that he learned there could be brought back completely to the real world.

In the darkness, a glowing shadow and a human figure flickered, as crisp echos sounded out continuously.

With rapt attention, Lin Xiao concentrated on the movements of the glowing shadow. Even the slightest twitch by the latter, was clearly memorized by him.

After such a long period of training, even though Lin Dong could not claim to be at the pinnacle of Penetrating Fist, he could be considered to have a very high level of mastery. On a good day, he could often generate all nine echoes.

However, even though Lin Dong was quite well-versed with Penetrating First, he was still unable to make any progress with the tenth echo.

“Pa Pa...”

When the glowing shadow once again produced the ninth echo, Lin Dong’s concentration abruptly rose to its peak. In that moment, he experienced an unreal sensation. He felt as though he had become the glowing shadow. The glowing shadow’s every minute movement and even the tiniest changes in its control of force were clearly engraved into his mind.

“Pa!”

A low, barely discernible echo sounded out as a powerful force once again followed the route through the channels and erupted from the palm of the glowing shadow. The strength of the last echo was truly monstrous.

“So that’s how it’s done...”

Lin Dong’s eyes gleamed as a joyful expression surfaced on his face. He had finally grasped the so called trick behind the tenth echo!

While he was in that mysterious state, Lin Dong had clearly experienced how the glowing shadow utilised the flow of force. He found that the tenth echo was not generated from the arms, but rather from within the body!

The first nine echos were on the outside, while the tenth echo

was from within!

“By perfectly coordinating one’s muscle and bones, one can break through the limits of the ninth echo and reach a new high. That is the tenth echo of Penetrating Fist!”

Lin Dong’s body trembled in excitement. This unique combination was something that even Lin Xiao did not know about. If he had not entered into that mysterious state, Lin Dong would never have grasped the secret behind the tenth echo!

Based on his calculations, if he could execute the tenth echo, Penetrating Fist would not be considered weak even among the ranks of Level 2 martial arts.

Even though Lin Dong had yet to truly grasp the tenth echo, he was confident that after this realization, he would finally be successful in mastering it!

Moreover, he knew that once he had mastered the tenth echo, it will definitely become his signature killing move. By then, Lin Dong was confident that he could match up even to someone like Lin Hong, who exceeded him by 2 layers and wielded Yuan Power.

As he recalled all the unscrupulous means that Lin Hong had adopted to force his Father consent to an engagement with Qing Tan, the rage in Lin Dong’s heart burned even hotter.

“This time, I will make sure to thrash you until you lose all face

to bring up this issue ever again!”

Lin Dong sneered, yet his expression quickly turned to one of seriousness. He positioned himself into the stance of Penetrating Fist and began to practise. He knew that Lin Hong was still ahead of the current him, thus he must continue to work hard!

“Pa Pa...”

In the darkness, the young man’s figure flowed gracefully like a monkey. Even as sweat rained down on his body, he tirelessly drilled Penetrating Fists over and over again as a series of crisp and clear echoes continuously reverberated in the air!

Chapter 13: Treatment

In the next few days, Lin Dong's lifestyle resumed its usual pace. In the day, he would frantically train his body, and once he was unable to endure the exhaustion, he would slip into the rock pool. Barely half an hour later, he would run out of the pool feeling refreshed and full of energy. Subsequently, sets of Penetrating Fists were vividly executed, causing a series of crisps echoes to continuously reverberate around the forest.

Among the younger generation in Lin Family, there was probably no one else who could maintain this intensive regime. After all, the effects of the rock pool were arguably better than that of a Grade 3 elixir. Furthermore, as the red-liquid was diluted, it became mild and gentle. Therefore, it would not hurt one's body at all. In fact, this was most suitable for someone in the initial training phase like Lin Dong.

During the night, Lin Dong would once again enter into the darkness of the Spiritual Domain. In there, he would tirelessly repeat set after set of his increasingly familiar Penetrating Fist. As he drilled without rest or food, his mastery of Penetrating Fist greatly improved until Lin Dong could now easily generate nine echoes! With regards to the tenth echo, Lin Dong was also gradually gaining a better understanding of it. Though he had yet to successfully master it, he knew that it was only a matter of time.

Furthermore, perhaps it was due to the strength that Lin Dong displayed at their previous encounter, Lin Shan, who previously loved to cause trouble for him, had stopped appearing before him. The latter probably understood that he would only be digging his own grave if he dared to cause trouble for Lin Dong again.

Therefore, right now, Lin Dong was able to peacefully dedicate all his energy into his training.

In a blink of an eye, a week passed amidst the peace and tranquility.

Within this week, Lin Dong had actively looking for opportunities to feed the red-liquid from the stone talisman to Lin Xiao. However, during this period, Lin Xiao was constantly away, hence Lin Dong had little opportunity to do so and thus had no choice but to temporarily suppressed the thought.

This situation continued on till the eighth day, until Lin Dong finally could no longer endure it any further. This was because Lin Xiao was injured once again...

As he was training, Lin Dong heard Qing Tan's anxious screams. Instantly he reacted and fled home. He barged into the room to see Lin Xiao lying on the bed, his face as pale as a sheet of paper. Drops of blood marking the ground below his sleeves.

"Father met a powerful beast when he went deep into the mountains to look for elixirs..." Qing Tan softly muttered from behind Lin Dong, her eyes red with grief.

Upon hearing these words, a wave of guilt gushed out from Lin Dong's heart as tears dropped from his eyes.

“Men should not cry. Its just a small injury”. As Lin Xiao saw Lin Dong standing by the door, he attempted to lift his body up. Just as he attempted to display a stern expression, a sharp pain emerged from his wounds, causing his expression to twist up in agony.

“Why are you still trying to put on a brave front now. Here, let me boil this elixir for you.” Liu Yan glared at Lin Xiao before she picked up a stalk of light-green herb by her side.

“Hey, that is for Dong-er!” Lin Xiao hastily said, upon witnessing this scene.

“Mother, let me boil this elixir. You and Qing Tan should take care of Father.” Before Lin Xiao’s words could fade away, Lin Dong dashed forward and snatched the elixir from Liu Yan’s hands. Without saying another word, he ran out of the room.

“This brat...”

As he watched Lin Dong’s slip away even faster than a rabbit, Lin Xiao did not know whether to laugh or cry. He helplessly shook his head, a warmth bubbling in his heart.

Shortly after Lin Dong left, he came back holding a green porcelain bowl in his hand. The bowl was filled to the brim with a dark green medicine with a medicinal fragrance that could be smelt even from a distance away.

“Father, please drink this medicine.” Lin Dong smiled as he

brought the medicine over.

“Sigh, you cheeky boy.” Lin Xiao helpless shook his head. Even though his heart was aching, he could only receive the bowl. Without a word, he gulped down the medicine.

As he saw Lin Xiao finish the medicine, an eager expression surfaced on Lin Dong’s eyes. He had naturally added a few drops of red-liquid from the stone talisman into that bowl of medicine. However, he did not know how much aid it would provide to Lin Xiao’s injuries.

“Gulp.”

Upon finishing the medicine, Lin Xiao placed the bowl down and stared at Lin Dong, who was intently looking at his father’s face. Just as Lin Xiao was to put on a stern look, he suddenly felt his cheeks turn red as though a fire had been lit within his body.

“Father!”

Witnessing the change occurring to Lin Xiao, Qing Tan who was standing to one side turned pale.

“Cough, cough!”

As Qing Tan and Liu Yan turned white with fear, Lin Xiao’s body temperature continued to rise as his face became even redder. A split second later, he suddenly opened his mouth and spit out a

mouthful of filthy black blood.

“Xiao-ge, are you alright?” As she saw Lin Xiao unexpectedly vomit blood, Liu Yan hurriedly rushed over with tears in her eyes. Lin Xiao was the backbone of this family, if something happened to him, what would happen to her and the children?

As Lin Xiao gasped for air, the redness in his cheeks swiftly retreated. In place of it, a healthy reddish glow surfaced.

“My injuries....”

As Lin Xiao stared in disbelief at his palms. All of a sudden, he could feel that all the injuries that have been accumulated over the years in his body, had mostly been swept away.

The feeling of his channels once again free from any obstruction refreshed him and all his internal organs surged once again with power and vigour. This sensation was something he had not experienced for a long time.

“Liu Yan, my injuries, my injuries...” Lin Xiao trembled with excitement as he grabbed tightly onto Liu Yan’s hands. A wide smile of delight filled his usually stern face.

Liu Yan’s regained her wits as she witnessed the emotion in Lin Xiao’s eyes. A look of disbelief surfaced on her face as she asked: “Have you recovered?”

“Yes, Yes, almost, almost...”

Liu Xiao had become so emotional that he lost the ability to string words together. In the end, he could resist no longer and he tightly hugged Liu Yan while letting out a joyous, heartfelt laughter. Contained within his laughter were sounds of relief after the long years of torment. During these years, his progress has stagnated due to his internal injuries. Even though he pretended to give a strong front on the outside, anyone could tell that the person who was once the most impressive member of the Lin Family, was gradually replaced by a rotting husk.

However, if there is a will, there is a way! After all these years, his injuries which had hindered him to no end and showed no signs of recovery were finally going away!

As he looked at his jubilant parents, Lin Dong rubbed at the corners of his eyes, a wide smile forming on his face. The effects of the stone talisman had vastly exceeded his expectations. He knew that if Father drunk the medicine a few more times in the future, eradicating the injuries and making a full recovery was no longer an impossible dream.

And when his injuries have healed and recovered completely, Lin Xiao's strength will increase by leaps and bounds!

As Lin Dong heaved a sigh of relief in his heart, he pulled Qing Tan, who was smiling joyously as well, and slowly left the room.

“Creak.”

As he gently closed the door, a smile floated on Lin Dong's face. He softly murmured to himself: "Father, rest assured. You will definitely become the pillar of support for the Lin Family once again!"

Chapter 14: Grade 5 Yin Energy

The red-liquid from the stone talisman was more effective than expected in treating Lin Xiao's wounds. Within five days, the pale expression that had almost become a part of Lin Xiao's normal look, had gradually faded. In its place was a strong vitality, which had once again surfaced within Lin Xiao's body.

The fact that Lin Xiao injuries were gradually recovering was the most delightful news in their family. No matter what, Lin Xiao was the main pillar of support for the family, if he were to fall, the rest of them would definitely suffer.

As Lin Xiao's injuries recovered, the long festering resentment in his heart also gradually disappeared. Radiant smiles began to spring up frequently on Lin Xiao's usually stern face. Anyone could tell that his heart was also filled with many happy emotions.

Lin Dong was naturally delighted to witness the changes occurring in Lin Xiao, in turn, it caused him to feel more energetic when he trained.

Over this period of time, the red-liquid in the rock pool had also completely dissipated. As such, Lin Dong had to start dripping red-liquid back into the rock pool. Thankfully, each drop was able to sustain him for more than ten days. Combined with the fact that the stone talisman produced a drop of red-liquid every five days, he was still able to maintain his current training pace.

Thanks to the stone talisman and his own exceedingly

hardworking nature, Lin Dong's training progress was very rapid. Within these past few days, the itching pain from his bones became more and more intense. The sensation, was akin to having numerous tiny ants gnawing away at his bones.

Even though the sensation was horrible, this was definitely great news for Lin Dong. He understood that this only happened when one was about to complete Bone Refining. Therefore this clearly implied that his current stage of training had extended from his skin to his bones. When the itching pain finally reaches its climax, his bones would have achieved the initial level of strengthening, at which, he would have officially advanced to Tempered Body 5th Layer.

Of course, it took time to strengthen one's body. Even with aid from the stone talisman, it would still be approximately a month before he could complete this step.

Even though time was running out, Lin Dong clearly enjoyed the feeling of the strength within his body increasing every day. At the same time, he also drilled to become more and more proficient at Penetrating Fist.

Thanks to guidance from the mysterious glowing shadow, the nine echoes Penetrating Fist has been brought to the point of perfection by the Lin Dong. When he executed the moves, it felt extremely natural and also gave him quite an imposing image.

As for the tenth echo, after the constant practise over these past few days, Lin Dong was gradually becoming better at it. At times, he could faintly hear the last echo sounding out from within his

body. Even though it could not match up to the deep and low echo produced by the glowing shadow, it was still a pretty remarkable achievement.

“Pa Pa Pa...”

In the vast empty fields of the Lin Family, a shadow danced like an agile monkey, as a series of crisp clear echoes sounded out in the forests.

Six echoes. As he finished his moves, six echoes sounded out.

“Good, not bad at all.”

Lin Xiao nodded, satisfied with Lin Dong’s performance. The fact that he could generate six echoes within a month of training, was indeed a truly astonishing achievement.

“Heh heh”. Lin Dong cheekily smiled, yet in his heart he secretly mused: Would Lin Xiao faint instantly if he knew Lin Dong could actually produce nine or even ten echoes?

“Father, you seem well recently. Have you recovered from your injuries?” Lin Dong asked with a smile as he wiped the sweat off his forehead.

“Hmm, almost there.” If Lin Dong had asked this question half a month ago, Lin Xiao’s face would darken immediately. However, right now he answered instantly with a merry look on his face.

Upon hearing these words, Lin Dong cheerily remarked: “So, Father should be able to return to Heavenly Yuan level soon?”

Lin Xiao shook his head, as he let out a sigh. With a pained smile on his face, he replied: “It’s not going to be so easy. After all, I have suffered from such serious injuries all these years. Even though my injuries have largely healed, there may still be some after-effects. Therefore, whether I can return to Heavenly Yuan level, still depends on luck.”

Even though he said these words, Lin Xiao had a fairly large amount of faith in himself. After all, he was once the man who was hailed as a genius in the Lin Family. All these years, his progress had stagnated only because of his injuries. Once his injuries were healed, there was no telling how far he could progress.

Lin Dong nodded his head in understanding. He knew that it would not be easy for his father to reclaim his place among the elites in Qingyang Town.

“Father, two days ago, I found this object in the woods. Can you tell me what it is?” Lin Dong inquired as he quickly took out a white bean-sized pearl and passed it to Lin Xiao.

At first, Lin Xiao did not pay much heed to this request as he casually took the item from Lin Dong and glanced at it. As he was about to dismiss his son’s find, he suddenly felt a stream of pure Yin Energy gushing from the pearl, causing his expression to change dramatically.

“Grade 5 Yin Energy?”

Lin Xiao foolishly stared at the seemingly ordinary white pearl as shock surfaced in his eyes.

“Grade 5 Yin Energy?” Lin Dong curiously asked. As he was still far from reaching Earthly Yuan level, he did not know much about Yin Energy.

“Where did you get this from?” Lin Xiao looked Lin Dong in the eye and asked him excitedly.

“I picked it up in the mountains.” Lin Dong muttered. Though he had complete faith in his Father, he had the feeling that if news of this miraculous stone talisman got out, it may lead to the destruction of his entire clan.

In response, Lin Xiao was shocked. Forcing a smile, he nodded his head. After all, he realized that it would be too greedy to ask for a large supply of this invaluable treasure.

“Father, what exactly is Grade 5 Yin Energy?” Lin Dong asked again.

“Between Heaven and Earth, Yin and Yang Energy, can be classified into nine grades. Grade 1 being the lowest, while Grade 9 being the highest. For most Earthly Yuan practitioners, when they absorb Yin Energy from between Heaven and Earth, it is at best

Grade 2 or Grade 3. In the past, the Yin Energy that I absorbed was merely Grade 3.” Lin Xiao replied as he tapped into his memories.

“Based on my judgement, the Yin Energy contained within this Yin Pearl should be at least Grade 5. For some Earthly Yuan practitioners, this pearl holds a highly seductive appeal.”

“Earthly Yuan practitioners absorb Yin Energy, while Heavenly Yuan practitioners absorb Yang Energy. When the Yin and Yang Energy synergize, a Yuan Dan will be formed.” Lin Xiao continued, as he licked his lips. “You might not know this, but even within the Yuan Dan stage, there are different ranks. To describe in detail, there are a total of nine different ranks, termed as the Nine Stars of Yuan Dan. A One Star Yuan Dan is the lowest level, whereas a Nine Star Yuan Dan..... I have never heard of anyone in the Great Yan Empire that possesses this quality of Yuan Dan. Of course, it might be because of my seclusion.”

“And the final quality of one’s Yuan Dan, will hinge upon the grade of Yin Yang Energy that one absorbs during the Earthly Yuan and Heavenly Yuan stages. Thus, the Earthly Yuan and Heavenly Yuan stages could be considered as building blocks of sorts for the Yuan Dan stage.”

Upon hearing these words, Lin Dong was stunned as he had never realized how important Yin Yang Energy was.

“If word of this Yin Pearl got out, it would definitely attract the attention of many Earthly Yuan practitioners. Heh, after all, Grade 5 Yin Energy is truly a rare find.” Lin Xiao remarked.

“Hehe, since Father is at Earthly Yuan level, please take that Yin Pearl and use it.” Lin Dong cheekily replied.

Upon hearing these words, Lin Xiao’s slightly aged face reddened. Letting out a dry cough, he immediately kept the Yin Pearl without acting coy. After all, the Yin Energy contained within was indeed very vital for him.

Lin Dong silently smiled as he saw Lin Xiao keep the Yin Pearl. Though soon after, his eyebrows knitted together. This Yin Pearl was condensed from the chilling cold that emerged from Qing Tan’s body. If the chilling cold that emerged was already at Grade 5, then how powerful was the chilling cold that resided within Qing Tan’s body?

“Such a terrifying chilling cold... exactly what is going on with Qing Tan’s body?”

Chapter 15: Tempered Body 5th Layer

A hot month of summer passed by in the blink of an eye.

During this month, Lin Dong continued to secretly add the red-liquid from the stone talisman into Lin Xiao's medicine. Thanks to its miraculous properties, Lin Xiao's injuries had completely recovered, and his previously depressed and pale faced self had in turn faded into oblivion.

During this period of time, Lin Dong had likewise achieved remarkable progress in his own training. Thanks to the red-liquid from the stone talisman, the itching pain in his bones kept growing in intensity. Lin Dong could clearly feel that amidst the itching pain, the tenacity and strength of his body were rapidly increasing.

This sensation delighted Lin Dong because he knew that he was swiftly advancing to Tempered Body 5th Layer.

“Huff, huff.”

In the cool and refreshing mountain cave, a shadow firmly supported his body using only both of his thumbs while his feet hovered off the surface of the ground. He relied solely on the strength of his thumbs to support his entire body as he moved his body up and down using his arms, what we would liken to a push-up. Sweat already drenched his clothes, yet new waves of sweat continuously dripped onto the floor, forming a giant puddle.

“Thud!”

Every muscle in his body was being fully utilized. Approximately half an hour later, Lin Dong finally collapsed in exhaustion. As he laid on the floor, hurriedly trying to catch his breath, an extreme aching sensation slowly spread throughout his body.

“Splash!”

Lin Dong clenched his teeth, as he struggled to lift his body and overcome the pain from the overwhelming exhaustion. Without taking off his clothes, he weakly fell into the rock pool.

As Lin Dong plopped into the rock pool, light-red bubbles surfaced immediately and tunneled into Lin Dong’s body through its pores.

Lin Dong floated lazily in the rock pool, the current him only had the strength to gasp for breath. It felt as if every cell in his body was protesting against him. However, these “protests” instantly turned into greed as his cells hungrily devoured the light-red liquid that burrowed into his body.

Lin Dong closed his eyes as he enjoyed this nourishing sensation. Just as he stretched his body, it suddenly began to shake uncontrollably. A sharp pain reverberated from within his bones and swiftly spread out to his entire body.

This sudden pain caused Lin Dong to clench his jaw in agony. Yet a look of excitement surfaced in his eyes.

“Breakthrough!”

This sensation was exactly what Lin Dong was anticipating. His chance for a breakthrough had finally arrived!

The pain swiftly spread throughout his body. It was akin to someone drilling through every bone in his body all at once. However, in that instance, Lin Dong could clearly feel every bone in his body gradually becoming stronger and tougher!

The sharp pain left as quickly as it arrived. In less than five minutes, the pain gradually weakened.

After the sharp pain dissipated, Lin Dong felt spirited and full of energy. As he leapt out of the rock pool, he stretched his body, causing a crisp crack to sound out from within. Right now, he seemed to have grown taller and looked much fitter than before.

“Pa Pa Pa Pa...”

As soon as he landed, Lin Dong immediately executed his familiar set of Penetrating Fist moves as a series of crisp sound clearly ricocheted in the mountain cave. From the faint echos, one could tell that the force behind his fists, seemed to have grown to a whole new level.

“Thump!”

As the ninth echo sounded out, Lin Dong smashed his fist onto a huge boulder. Immediately, a few cracks appeared on the boulder. It seems that both his strength and power had been greatly enhanced after reaching Tempered Body 5th Layer. Truly incomparable to the 4th Layer.

Upon witnessing this scene, Lin Dong grinned. Just as he was about to rest, a thought sprung up in his mind. Maintaining his form, he closed his eyes and tried to enjoy the mysterious sensation surging through his bones.

As he enjoyed the sensation, Lin Dong's body adjusted and moved in conjunction with the flow of energy coursing through his body. Even on the skin under his sleeves, tiny ripples started to surface.

Every muscle in his body moved in unison as waves of force surged forth and gathered at Lin Dong's arm.

“Pa!”

When the waves of force reached his fist, Lin Dong eyes suddenly flew open as an extremely tiny echo quietly vibrated out from within his body.

This echo was not loud, yet it was packed with an immense force!

“Bang!”

As the force was finally about to arrive at the tip of his fist, Lin

Dong took in a deep breath. Releasing a low shout, he violently punched the solid boulder before him. A low echo sounded out as the cracks began to spread all across the boulder. Finally, it exploded with a massive bang.

“Such fearsome might!”

Lin Dong stared at the rubble which was once a huge boulder, a look of disbelief on his face. The force displayed was virtually comparable to that of Lower Category Level 3 martial arts!

“So this is the true power of the tenth echo from Penetrating Fist!”

Moments later, Lin Dong finally regained his senses. A look of excitement bubbled in his eyes. This was the first time he properly executed the tenth echo! He now understood why it was so difficult to master the tenth echo: it possessed such a terrifying strength.

According to Lin Dong’s calculations, if he encountered Lin Hong now, he could rely on this Penetrating Fist tenth echo to fight to a standstill with the latter. Even in the Lin Family, Level 3 martial arts were rare to come by. Plus among the current younger generation, there was no one who was capable enough to learn them.

“Heh heh, Lin Hong, just you wait.....”

As he recalled the vile manner in which Lin Hong casually

assumed Qing Tan to be his possession, Lin Dong involuntarily tightened his fist. With a sneer, he cast his gaze towards the rock pool as he eyebrows knitted tightly together. Over this period of time, he realized that the effects of the diluted red-liquid from the stone talisman had begun to wear off and was now not as potent as before.

“Seems like the diluted red-liquid is no longer able to satisfy my demands. If I want to quickly advance to Tempered Body 6th Layer, I may have to use the red-liquid directly.”

Tempered Body 6th Layer can be considered as the most important checkpoint for a new practitioner at the initial stages. At the 6th Layer, one can finally refine a Yuan Power Seed. Once that is accomplished, one can then be considered as a true practitioner!

Therefore, the significance of this step cannot be overlooked.

As Lin Dong's expression turned serious, he took out a transparent bottle from his sleeves. It was already half filled with the crimson red liquid from the stone talisman.

As he gazed at the bountiful amount of red-liquid, the corners of Lin Dong's mouth finally turned upwards to form a smile of contentment.

Chapter 16: Eight Desolations Palm

Ever since Lin Dong successfully made a breakthrough to the 5th Layer, his crazy training speed started to tone down. Although he still had help from the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid, he understood that too much excess will only bring harm upon oneself. Thus he decided to moderate his pace.

Consequently, over the next few days, Lin Dong seemed more relaxed than before. Whenever he had time, he would practise his almost perfectly mastered Penetrating Fist. Having previously grasped the secret behind it, Lin Dong was now finally able to smoothly execute the tenth echo of Penetrating Fist. However, he continued to keep this a secret, after all, this was his secret finishing move.

After relaxing at this gradual pace for a few days, Lin Dong finally resumed his intensive training. However, this time, he did not return to soak in the rock pool because it did not bring much benefit to him.

In fact, Lin Dong planned to start directly consuming the red liquid from the stone talisman.

Lin Dong had pondered for a day before he finally decided on this course of action. The Stone Talisman Ling Liquid was extremely rich in Ling Qi. Based on Lin Dong's calculations, he reasoned that the degree of Ling Qi within was greater than that of a normal Grade 3 elixir. Thus, if one was not careful, such a potent Ling Qi may instead do more harm than good.

However, he had little alternatives left, if he did not use this method. This is because the diluted Stone Talisman Ling Liquid already had little effect on him. Furthermore, there was only three months left before the Family Competition and Lin Dong desperately needed to advance to Tempered Body 6th Layer before that. Only then, could he secure his victory over Lin Hong. He knew that if Lin Hong managed to obtain a good result, he would definitely ask Grandfather for an engagement with Qing Tan. When that time comes, should Lin Xiao disagree, it would definitely cause some commotion. This was a scenario that Lin Dong did not wish to see play out.

Thus, to put an end to this matter, the only way was for him utterly humiliate Lin Hong until he lost all face to make that request!

However, although Lin Dong extremely disliked Lin Hong, he had to admit that the latter was indeed skilled. Lin Hong had already advanced to Tempered Body 6th Layer a few months back, who knew how much he had improved since then? Therefore, Lin Dong knew that he must be thoroughly prepared.

With all these issues in mind, consuming the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid to boost his training was clearly the only option.

“Gulp!”

In his room, Lin Dong stared at the bowl of crimson red liquid before him. As he gritted his teeth, he took in a deep breath before he immediately lifted the bowl, emptied its contents into his mouth with a ‘gu lu gu lu’ sound.

As the crimson red liquid entered his body, Lin Dong's cheeks instantly turned fiery red. White steam started to emerge from the top of his head before spiralling upwards.

“Glup glup!”

Lin Dong's teeth chattered uncontrollably. The crimson red liquid that he had poured into his body seemed to have transformed into lava as it flowed inside his body. An intolerable burning sensation struck Lin Dong in every part of his body that the 'lava' passed.

Both his arms hugged his body as he lay paralyzed on the ground. As he curled up in pain, he tried desperately to resist and endure the burning sensation in his body.

Within the room, a figure thrashed about in pain, rolling back and forth on the ground. His constrained gasps sounded a little hoarse as he was afraid that if he shouted too loudly, Lin Xiao and the rest be alerted.

The inhumane torment lasted for a full ten minutes before it gradually receded.

As the last wisps of burning pain faded from his body, Lin Dong's trembling self slowly calmed down. He gasped deeply a few times, before stretching out to lie powerlessly on the floor.

As he laid face flat on the ground, within his body, a sudden cooling medicinal effect appeared. This medicinal effect quickly infused itself into his bones, causing him to faintly feel slightly numb, as if something had entered into the deepest part of his bones.

“Refining force has entered my bones?”

When he became aware of the numbness that spread out from the deepest part of his bones, Lin Dong’s mind abruptly jolted. What he was experiencing now, implied that he was slowly advancing towards Tempered Body 6th Layer. When the force channels merged with the bone marrow, a Yuan Power Seed will be born in the bone marrow!

“The pain was worth it!”

Lin Dong wiped the sweat from his face as he chuckled. Under normal circumstances, it will take at least two or three months before the refining force will enter one’s bones. Yet the Stone Talisman Spiritual Liquid had shortened the time needed by an insane amount. Although consuming the liquid had caused him a tremendous amount of pain, comparing the rewards that he had gained, all the pain now seemed insignificant.

“The medicinal effect will linger in my body for a few days, I can’t waste this opportunity. Time to start a hyper intensive training regime.”

Lin Dong crawled up from the ground while he could feel the

lingering medicinal effect of the Stone Talisman Spiritual Liquid in his body. This medicinal effect was quite valuable, hence he knew that he must not waste any of it. After all, he had a limited amount of Stone Talisman Spiritual Liquid and it was good for him to be frugal when using it.

As he wriggled his body, Lin Dong let out a satisfied grin. He pushed open the door and exited the house in order to proceed with his daily training.

Since he had tasted the benefits from directly consuming the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid, Lin Dong decided that he will consume one drop of Stone Talisman Ling Liquid every four days.

A drop every four days. This rate of consumption caused Lin Dong's heart to feel somewhat pained. Although he did not know just exactly how valuable the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid, he knew it definitely would not be lower than Grade 3 Elixirs. And, consuming a Grade 3 Elixir every four days was truly lavish and it was probably something only a handful of people in Qingyang Town could afford to.

Of course, though he consumed lavishly, the rewards was indeed bountiful. In a short half a month's time, Lin Dong could feel as if something was burning in the deepest part of his bones. This sensation was like something was about to be born in his bone marrow.

And when Lin Dong was taking a break from Tempered Body training, he once again went to disturb Lin Xiao in order get the latter to teach him more martial arts.

After several months of practising Penetrating Fist, Lin Dong had completely mastered it. Yet he was hardly satisfied, thanks to the miraculous powers of the Stone Talisman, martial arts were like a shortcut to becoming strong, as even a normal martial art would transform into an extraordinary one under the guidance of Stone Talisman Glowing Shadow.

Hence, for Lin Dong, it was definitely beneficial for him to learn more martial arts.

However, Lin Xiao held a contrasting view. To him, martial arts were important, but the most important factor was still the strength of one's body. He was worried that Lin Dong will neglect training his body if he focuses too much on learning martial arts. In that case, it would not be worth it at all.

However, despite his concerns, when Lin Dong executed the seventh echo of Penetrating Fist, the former was finally cornered. Lin Xiao looked at Lin Dong with a strange gaze for a good part of the day, before he eventually forced himself to admit that his son had an affinity with martial arts that even surpassed his own.

After convincing Lin Xiao with his performance, Lin Dong successfully obtained a set of martial arts from the former.

Eight Desolations Palm, Lower Category Level 2 martial arts.

Lin Dong was very satisfied because he knew that this set of palm techniques was the same martial arts that Lin Hong primarily

focused on.

Lin Dong was very eager to see the expression on Lin Hong's face once he realized that Lin Dong's Eight Desolations Palm had immensely surpassed his, during the Family Competition.

In the quiet night, Lin Dong once again drifted into the dark Spiritual Domain.

This time, when Lin Dong appeared in the dark space, two glowing shadows also blinked into existence. As he gazed at the familiar palm technique the second glowing shadow was executing, an impatient smile formed on Lin Dong's face.

He was eager to know, just how much of an improvement will this Lower Category Level 2 martial art experience be, in the hands of the glowing shadow?

Chapter 17: Scorpion Tiger

In the darkness of the Spiritual Domain, two glowing shadows seemed to danced in pace as they displayed their respective set of palm and fist techniques.

Lin Dong's eyes were tightly locked onto the new glowing shadow as the latter demonstrated the Eight Desolations Palm that he had just learnt from Lin Xiao today.

“This stone talisman is truly magical. I guess it draws from my memories and projects the things I have learnt in a unique manner. Furthermore, during the process, it perfects the moves...”

Lin Dong was stumped at how incredulous it sounded. However, although these mystical powers were truly unimaginable, right now, he could only accept the facts that were presented before of him.

Since he could not unravel the mysteries behind the stone talisman, he decided to focus on his training instead. After all, the stone talisman did not harm him, so why should he bother wracking his brains over this issue?

Putting his thoughts into action, Lin Dong fully focused his attention onto the Eight Desolations Palm the glowing shadow now displaying. The Eight Desolations Palm was noted for its ferocity. Though it looked simple, hidden within each move was a monstrous force.

Engrossed in the glowing figure as it executed Eight Desolations Palm again and again, Lin Dong's brows gradually furrowed more and more as he concentrated. He realized that the Eight Desolations Palm of the glowing figure actually melded the forceful blows with traces of gentle strokes. As strength and gentleness twined together in perfect harmony, the power to devastate any opponent was born.

“By making a few tiny adjustments, one can actually add traces of gentle strokes into the aggressive Eight Desolations Palm. This stone talisman is truly magical.”

Lin Dong marvelled at the stone talisman. Though these martial arts merely belonged to the lower category, it was not impossible for some truly skilled practitioners to refine and improve them. However, the stone talisman was not a person...

“Combining gentle and hard strokes will increase the attacking power of Eight Desolations Palm. In fact, if utilized correctly, its strength may even rival that of the tenth echo of Penetrating Fist. Though, this will definitely be an uphill battle to accomplish.”

Of course, Lin Dong was long ago mentally prepared for this thus he did not feel disheartened. Instead, a fervour grew in his eyes that were glued onto the glowing shadow as he moved into the stance of Eight Desolations Palm and began to practise.....

Like sand that slipped through one's fingers, time passed by swiftly as he trained and drilled. In the blink of an eye, another half a month passed.

During these past few months, everyone in the Lin Family was training intensively. Even the usual trouble makers were forced by their respective parents to train hard. After all, the Lin Family Competition in two months time was a very important event for every member of the Lin Family.

If one is able to distinguish himself in this competition, he will not only be given the best treatment, but his parent's status in the Lin Family will also skyrocket. Therefore, many parents hoped that their children will perform well during the competition.

In this half a month's time, the burning sensation deep within Lin Dong's bones blazed hotter and hotter. However, the Yuan Power Seed continued to elude him, leading him to feel slightly resigned.

Nonetheless, he took comfort in his practise of Eight Desolations Palm. Under the guidance of the glowing shadow, he had come close to mastering the Eight Desolations Palm. Even though he was unable to combine the gentle and hard strokes perfectly, when he executed Eight Desolations Palm, the force that he produced was still very impressive.

Furthermore, Lin Xiao's had also made a complete recovery. After a few days of cultivation, he also succeeded in absorbing the Yin Energy from the Yin Pearl. Even though Lin Dong was not able to pick up anything from his father's outer appearance, he could faintly sense that Lin Xiao's strength was growing by leaps and bounds.

Based on his speed, it was only a matter of time before he is restored to Heavenly Yuan level.

In the midst of the dense forest, Lin Dong stood atop a large tree as he gazed down upon the forest. Traces of blood dotted his body as a slightly bloody scent floated his near vicinity.

Naturally, this fresh blood did not belong to Lin Dong, but rather to the wild beasts that he had hunted. Over this past half a month, Lin Dong could feel that something was about to be born in his bone marrow. However, no matter how hard he trained, he was unable to break through the final barrier.

In desperation, Lin Dong decided to test his skills in the wild as he hoped that his Yuan Power Seed will be born during a real battle. Furthermore, it also provided him with a good opportunity to test his mettle.

As he was unable to find anyone to engage in actual combat with, he could only turn towards the wild beasts.

Over these past few days, several wild beasts have already met their maker at Lin Dong's hands. Furthermore, after overcoming his nerves in the initial fights, Lin Dong was now used to killing these wild beasts.

“Movement!”

Lin Dong suddenly froze, a split second later, he jumped off the

tree and shot off like an arrow. However, he abruptly stopped as he stared at the fearsome wild beast in some distance away.

“Scorpion Tiger.”

This was a brown creature, whose body resembled that of a tiger. However, its tail was razor-sharp and looked similar to a scorpion.

Scorpion Tiger was a savage creature covered in fur as hard as metal, an extremely difficult adversary. Therefore, Lin Dong briefly thought about retreating after he discovered his new “opponent”.

However, just as Lin Dong saw the Scorpion Tiger, the latter also discovered his presence. The creature immediately turned its scarlet eyes towards Lin Dong, releasing a loud roar as it stood up.

Just as the creature stood up, from the corner of his eyes, Lin Dong spotted a crystal clear dark-red fruit, below a tree that was right behind the creature. He could faintly smell a light fragrance emitted by the fruit.

“Is that...a Grade 3 elixir, Crystal Vermillion Fruit?”

As the Crystal Vermillion Fruit reflected in his eyes, Lin Dong immediately gasped in a breath of cold air. To think that he would encounter a Grade 3 Elixir here, it seems like today was really his lucky day?

Lin Dong had seen this Crystal Vermillion Fruit before in Qingyang Town, where it was being sold at an exorbitant price.

Upon this accidental discovery, Lin Dong's footsteps paused mid step. Seeing this, a murderous intent flashed across the Scorpion Tiger's eyes. Releasing a low growl, it lept towards Lin Dong.

At this sight, Lin Dong hastily retreated, only to see the creature trampling over a tree, which had a girth as thick as his arm.

“Thump!”

As Lin Dong side stepped behind the creature and threw a few blows in succession onto its body. The strength behind his blows sent the creature flying onto its back. However, it did not look like it took any damage.

“Such a tough hide...”

At this scene, Lin Dong froze. He knew that he had underestimated this creature.

“Roar.”

The Scorpion Tiger immediately jumped back on its feet and then leaped into the air as it attempted to stomp on Lin Dong's chest with its thick and powerful tiger hoof.

“Pa Pa Pa...”

A strong musky smell assaulted his senses. Faced with such a ferocious incoming attack, Lin Dong did not dare to take any chances. Instantly, ten echoes from Penetrating Fist sounded out as he delivered the final punch to counter the creature’s attack.

“Boom!”

Fist and hoof collided in mid air. Immediately, a large and small figure were blown away in opposite directions. As Lin Dong crashed onto a tree, fresh blood spilled out from the corner of his mouth. Just as rage boiled in his body, he suddenly felt an intense burning sensation. Amidst that burning sensation, Lin Dong could feel that a mysterious power was being born in his bone marrow!

“Yuan Power Seed?!”

Lin Dong’s body stiffened. His mouth hung open in shock as his body started to tremble uncontrollably in excitement. To his amazement, his intense battle with the Scorpion Tiger was the trigger for the birth of the Yuan Power Seed that had constantly eluded him!

Chapter 18: Yuan Power Seed

From the depths of his bone marrow, a bizarre energy slowly flowed as an incredulous force gradually spread out from his bone marrow and started coursing through his body, eventually encompassing every part of his body.

“Is this the Yuan Power Seed?”

A look of joy sprung up in Lin Dong’s eyes. All of a sudden, it was as if the whole world had brightened up. He could even feel a mystical force flowing through the surrounding air which greatly resembled the Yuan Power Seed hidden in his bones.

“Yuan Power...”

Lin Dong stood up and could not help but release a hearty laughter. After such a long period of hard training plus the aid from the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid, he had finally refined a Yuan Power Seed in his body today! Right now, he had officially stepped into the realm of a true practitioner!

“Roar!”

As Lin Dong laughed, the Scorpion Tiger nearby continued to stare at Lin Dong with its scarlet eyes. This time, it could faintly sense a familiar scent coming from the latter. However, this was not enough to deter it. With a low growl, it opened its bloody mouth and charged towards Lin Dong.

Sensing the incoming murderous intent, Lin Dong lifted his head. However, in his eyes, the movements of the Scorpion Tiger felt much slower than before, allowing him to instantly grasp the attack trajectory of the creature.

“Is this the power of Tempered Body 6th Layer...?”

Lin Dong’s eyes lit up as he gently stepped to the side and avoided the creature’s pounce. Lightly extending his right palm, a weak light flashed as his palm chopped heavily towards the Scorpion Tiger’s head.

“Chop!”

A deep and low sound rang out and scalding fresh blood sprayed into the air. Lin Dong’s palm had directly chopped through the Scorpion Tiger’s thick hide and decapitated it!

The Scorpion Tiger’s body stiffened before it landed on the ground with a thud. Fresh blood splattered onto the ground, dyeing it crimson red.

“Yuan Power... so strong...”

As Lin Dong stared at the corpse of the Scorpion Tiger he had killed in one blow, he involuntarily sucked in a breath of cold air. Is this the strength of Yuan Power? No wonder people often say that the 5th and 6th Layers are worlds apart.

“Thankfully, I did not fight it out with Lin Hong previously. Or else, I would definitely suffer.” Lin Dong carefully examined his palm and picked up some leaves to clean off the bloodstains. His heart was still filled with trepidation as this was his first time witnessing the formidable Yuan Power.

Lin Dong kicked the corpse to one side and arrived at place where the Crystal Vermillion Fruit was in two strides. As he stared at the sparkling exterior of the fruit, an envious glint surfaced in his eyes. The price of this Grade 3 Elixir was rather high. Normally, one would only find them within the ancient deep forests. To be able to discover a stalk here today, he must really be blessed by Lady Luck.

After Lin Dong carefully examined the fruit, he then stretched forward to grab it. However, just as he touched the Crystal Vermillion Fruit, a faint warm sensation suddenly emitted from the Stone Talisman at his chest.

In response to the sudden change in the Stone Talisman, Lin Dong fell into a daze. Soon after, he decided to remove the Stone Talisman and hold it on his palm. Ever since he advanced to Tempered Body 6th Layer, his senses had sharpened considerably. Hence, he could indistinctly feel that the Stone Talisman was currently releasing a weak suction force. Thanks to this suction force, faint streams of energy were pouring into the Stone Talisman.

“The Stone Talisman Ling Liquid is perhaps crystallized from the energy that the Stone Talisman absorbs!”

As this concept formed in his head, Lin Dong thought for a while before gazing at the Crystal Vermillion Fruit in his other palm. He suspected that the sudden change in the Stone Talisman was likely caused by this Crystal Vermillion Fruit.

Holding onto the Crystal Vermillion Fruit, Lin Dong hesitated for a moment before he gently brought the Crystal Vermillion Fruit near to the Stone Talisman. However, just as the Crystal Vermillion Fruit was inches away from the Stone Talisman, a powerful suction force abruptly emerged from the Stone Talisman. Instantly, the Crystal Vermillion Fruit flew towards the Stone Talisman and mysteriously disappeared on contact.

Lin Dong was stunned by this sight. Did the Stone Talisman just swallow the Crystal Vermillion Fruit?

Can the Stone Talisman eat?

Just as Lin Dong regained his wits, he suddenly noticed the crevice on the Stone Talisman flicker with a vermillion glow. Soon after, the glow intensified until eventually, it condensed into two bean-sized vermillion pills. As they tumbled down, Lin Dong quickly swiped them up.

Catching the lukewarm pills in his hand, Lin Dong could faintly feel that these pills contained a pure and highly-concentrated energy. In fact, this energy was even more potent than that of the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid.

“These pills should have been condensed from the Crystal

Vermillion Fruit...” From the pills, Lin Dong could smell the same fragrance he had smelt from the Crystal Vermillion Fruit. In addition to the scene that had just played before his eyes, it was not difficult to guess how the pills were produced.

“It looks like Stone Talisman is not only able to assimilate the energy from Heaven and Earth, but it can also absorb Elixirs and refine them into pills or liquid medicine of a greater purity...”

Excitement surfaced in Lin Dong’s eyes as he contemplated this new discovery. One Crystal Vermillion Fruit was refined into two pills. Furthermore, the medicinal properties of each pill seemed to be more potent than an individual Crystal Vermillion Fruit. It was as if the Stone Talisman had the ability to upgrade the effects of elixirs to its peak.

“I must obtain more elixirs. The energy in these pills seem to be even stronger than the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid. If I utilized these pills, I can definitely accelerate my training progress!”

As he imagined the potential it held, Lin Dong’s could not help but tighten his fists. He kept the Stone Talisman properly before he sped away.

After discovering this miraculous property of the Stone Talisman, Lin Dong was extremely excited for a few days. However, his excitement gradually subsided, as he realized that things were not as rosy as he had imagined.

Firstly, he did not have enough elixirs for the Stone Talisman to

refine. Even though Lin Xiao had recovered from his condition, he still refused any resources from the Lin Family. Therefore, Lin Dong could only rely upon himself to look for elixirs.

Furthermore, when Lin Dong tried to feed two Grade 1 elixirs to the Stone Talisman, to his surprise, only two flimsy beans were produced. After a few more experiments, he understood that if he wanted to produce pills like before, he needed to use a Grade 3 elixir or better. However, just where was he going to find these rare Grade 3 Elixirs?

He got extremely lucky the last time. It was almost impossible for lightning to strike the same spot twice...

Faced with these huge obstacles, Lin Dong was forced to temporarily suppress the greed in his heart. Right now, he could only hope to excel at the upcoming Family Competition so that he could finally utilize the vast resources of the Lin Family, and all his previous troubles would be swept away.

As he suppressed the extravagant greed in his heart, Lin Dong decided to refocus his energy back to his training. Even though he had advanced to Tempered Body 6th Layer, he knew that consuming the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid directly still held significant benefits for him. Therefore, as time passed, Lin Dong could clearly feel that the Yuan Power Seed coursing through his bone marrow was gradually seeping out from his bones.

And when the Yuan Power finally breaks out of his bones and flows into the channels within his body, he would have reached the first step of Tempered Body 7th Layer: Refining Yuan into the

Channels!

Of course, even with the help of the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid, it would still take some time before he could reach that step...

As Lin Dong's strength continued to grow by leaps and bounds, the hot summer period gradually ended, heralding the most important upcoming Family Competition...

Chapter 19: Breakthrough Before The Family Competition

Time flows like water, in a blink of an eye, the summer heat had dissipated and was replaced by cool breezes that blew across the lands.

Even though the heat was gone, the fire within the Lin Family members only burned hotter and hotter. This was because, the most important Family Competition was about to begin.

In the dense forest, a shadow flickered, as a set of fist techniques were being perfectly executed, flowing as naturally as the clouds in the sky. A series of crisp echos constantly reverberated in the forest.

Just as the eight echo sounded out, the figure abruptly opened his fists into palms as drafts of wind followed behind each forceful thrust, blowing away all the leaves on the ground.

In his hands, the two completely different palm and fist techniques had become exceptionally swift and nimble. His performance clearly demonstrated his complete mastery of these techniques and the fact that he had drilled them countless times before.

As the display ended, the figure also withdrew his fists.

“Excellent.”

Just as Lin Dong stopped, a content voice sounded out nearby. Immediately, he saw Lin Xiao approaching with a wide smile on his face. Beside him, Qing Tan followed while secretly winking as she made eye contact with Lin Dong, an extremely adorable sight.

“Not bad, in less than 4 months, you have managed to reach Penetrating Fist eighth echo. Moreover, you have also become highly proficient with the Eight Desolations Palm. This is indeed a remarkable achievement.”

Lin Dong humbly scratched his head, yet in his heart he cheekily smiled. He had yet to reveal all his cards in that display. Eight echoes was an easy task for him who was already extremely proficient in ten echoes. As for Eight Desolations Palm, after two months of intensive training, he reached the step of coupling strength and gentleness. And its destructive potential definitely rivalled that of Penetrating Fist tenth echo.

By possessing these two powerful signature moves, Lin Dong was probably unrivalled among the younger generation in the Lin Family.

“The Family Competition will be held tomorrow. Since you are now Tempered Body 5th Layer, and equipped with Penetrating Fist and Eight Desolations Palm, it should not be difficult for you to achieve a decent result.”

For the nine Layers of Tempered Body, only the 4th Layer was particularly easy to observe. Beyond that, the changes normally

occur internally. Therefore, unless one is carefully inspected, one's level would not be known. Even though Lin Dong had already advanced to Tempered Body 6th Layer two months ago, he wanted to keep the Stone Talisman secret so he did not tell anyone about his frightening training progress.

As such, even his father, Lin Xiao, believed that Lin Dong was only at Tempered Body 5th Layer. Moreover, his father never suspected a thing, as it was already an outstanding achievement to rise from Tempered Body 2nd Layer to 5th layer within half a year.

“Father, have you recovered your strength?” Lin Dong suddenly asked as he looked at Lin Xiao's face.

Upon hearing these words, Lin Xiao let out a chuckle. As he gently ruffled Lin Dong's hair, he murmured: “ All these years, you, your mother and your sister have suffered immensely because of my illness. Rest assured, I will make sure this kind of thing never happens again.”

As Lin Dong gazed at Lin Xiao, he could vividly feel that the decadence within Lin Xiao had completely disappeared. Right now, Lin Xiao resembled his old majestic self, except he seemed a bit more calm and reserved.

Lin Dong lightly nodded his head, as he began to tear. All these years, his biggest dream was for his Father to pull himself together. Thankfully, he finally succeeded.

“Heh, it's getting late. You can stop training today. Rest well

tonight in preparation for the Family Competition tomorrow.” Lin Xiao said as he patted Lin Dong’s shoulder before turning to leave.

As he gazed at Lin Xiao’s back, Lin Dong’s fists tightened as he muttered in a low voice: “Father, rest assured. Tomorrow, I will shock the whole family. The son that you taught will definitely be the best!”

“Lin Dong-ge, please be cautious if you encounter Lin Hong tomorrow. According to Lin Changqiang, Lin Hong has already advanced to Tempered Body 7th layer.” Qing Tan who was standing at one corner, came up to warn Lin Dong right after Lin Xiao departed, worry on her face.

“Tempered Body 7th Layer?”

Lin Dong was momentarily stunned, though soon after, he chuckled. It seemed like Lin Hong’s father has really spared no expense in order to ensure that Lin Hong excelled in the Family Competition.

However, so what if he is at Tempered Body 7th Layer?

As the night descended, moonlight poured through the windows into the room.

Seated on his bed, Lin Dong retrieved a tiny bottle from his person. Next, he dripped two drops of Stone Talisman Ling Liquid into his mouth.

Over these few months, Lin Dong's body had gradually adapted to the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid. Therefore, he was now able to endure two drops at once.

As the two drops of Stone Talisman Ling Liquid entered his body, Lin Dong's face turned red. Faint white smoke emerged from the top of his head, as his body temperature rose rapidly.

Having gotten used to it, unlike his first attempt, Lin Dong no longer tossed and turned on the floor in pain. Instead, his body merely trembled a few times as he felt that the warmth feeling of the Yuan Power Seed in his bone marrow become stronger and stronger.

After these past two months of training, Lin Dong could clearly feel that the Yuan Power Seed within his bones has gradually strengthened. At times, he could even feel signs that the Yuan Power Seed was about to burst out of his bones. Lin Dong understood that these signs indicated that a breakthrough was about to happen.

Facing these circumstances, Lin Dong did not try to forcibly accelerate the breakthrough. He knew that if he wanted to, he could forced his way to Tempered Body 7th Layer. However he somehow felt that it would be better to let nature take its course instead.

And the moment that he was waiting for had finally arrived...

As the two drops of Rock Talisman Ling Liquid entered his body, the vibrations deep within his bones suddenly became more and more violent, until eventually Lin Dong's entire body began to shake.

“Something is finally about to break through...”

Sensing the imminent situation, Lin Dong immediately took a deep breath. He knew that the instant the Yuan Power Seed broke through the confines of his bones, it would flow into his body's internal channels. And then, he would finally be able to absorb Yuan Energy from between heaven and Earth to train his body. An extremely important step!

“Buzz Buzz!”

His body started to trembled even mores severely. All of a sudden, a deep sound rang out from within Lin Dong's body.

After he heard this deep sound, Lin Dong's vision immediately darkened. Suddenly, he could vaguely see that within his body was a glowing walnut-sized light ball, slowly coursing through his body. Moreover, a mysterious suction force gushed out, and thanks to this suction force, traces of extremely mild energy within the surrounding Heaven and Earth were slowly moving in accordance with Lin Dong's breathing and pouring into his body.

“Is this Yuan Power Seed? Why is it so big?”

As Lin Dong recovered his vision, a look of shock immediately surfaced on his face. Under normal circumstances, the Yuan Power Seed that just broke through the practitioner's bones, should not be bigger than a thumb. Yet this Yuan Power Seed was larger than normal by over ten times!

“Is it because of the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid?”

Lin Dong held a strange expression on his face. The size of one's Yuan Power Seed largely depends on how rapidly one absorbs Yuan Power. However, from the get go, his Yuan Power Seed was already so much larger compared to others...

After contemplating this issue for a while, Lin Dong finally gave up as he helplessly shook his head. Lying down on his bed, he knew that all he could do now was prepare for the upcoming Family Competition tomorrow...

“Lin Hong, lets see if you have what it takes to marry Qing Tan!”

Chapter 20: The Family Competition Begins

Just as the first rays of dawn broke through the clouds and shone onto Earth, a hubbub buzzed in the Lin Family as a rowdy atmosphere enveloped their manor.

When Lin Xiao brought Lin Dong and Qing Tan to the training chambers of the Family Competition, it was already a lively place, packed full with people.

Even though the Lin Family could not be considered as a first-rate faction in Qingyang Town, they still held considerable sway. Therefore, there were several VIPs who had come specially to witness this Family Competition in order to use this occasion to build relationships with the Lin Family. Also, this competition also gave them an opportunity to assess the capabilities of the younger generation in the Lin Family. After all, the abilities of the next generation is vital for the continued prosperity of any family.

If the younger generation in the Lin Family prove themselves to be incompetent, then the Lin Family will fall sooner or later.

Even though this was not his first time witnessing a Family Competition, Lin Dong could not help but feel slightly tensed. After all, this time, he would be the one in the spotlight.

Lin Xiao patted Lin Dong's shoulders reassuringly, trying to ease the latter's nerves. Soon after, he brought the two of them and approached the VIP section of the training chambers.

Currently, there were already many people already seated at the VIP section, happily conversing among themselves.

Seated in the middle of the VIP section, was a somewhat lean middle-aged man who was cheerfully conversing with the other guests. Suddenly, he caught a glimpse of Lin Xiao and his children, causing him to freeze up on the spot. Though he quickly recovered as a frowned formed on his face.

In the past competitions, Lin Xiao would normally never appear. Even on the rare occasions when he turned up, he would stand in a discreet corner where no one would notice him. This was the first time in many years, that he directly approached the VIP section.

On the left side of the lean middle aged man were two youngsters, the brothers Lin Hong and Lin Shan. Tellingly, the man seated next to them was likely their Father, Lin Mang, who had bad blood with Lin Xiao.

Lin Xiao paid no heed towards Lin Mang's stare. Without missing a beat, just as he was about to walk past the latter, Lin Mang suddenly smiled. A teacup in his hand, he casually asked: "Third-brother, what finally brought you out of your house?"

Lin Xiao stopped and glanced at his half-brother, whom which he had a terrible relationship with ever since young. A smile surfaced on his face as he replied: "Is it a problem?"

As he witnessed Lin Xiao's smile, Lin Mang was shocked as he noticed that he could not find any traces of the usual despondency

in that smile. This discovery made him feel uncomfortable, yet he remarked in an indifferent manner: “There is no problem. Its just that today is an important occasion for my Lin Family. Since you have appeared, I just hope that you don’t embarrass us.”

Lin Xiao lightly chuckled. Ignoring the insult hidden in Lin Mang’s words, he immediately brushed past him before seating himself in a nearby seat.

“Humph.”

Lin Xiao’s actions caused Lin Mang’s face to distorted slightly as he coldly snorted.

“Ahh, Lin Mang-xiong. Is this the man that once had the best chance among the Lin Family members to advance to Yuan Dan stage, Lin Xiao?” A man seated by Lin Mang’s side casually asked with a smile.

“Those are just rumours. How can you believe them?”. Lin Mang replied in derision.

“Ahh, of course. Right now, Lin Mang-brother is the prime candidate among the Lin Family to advance to Yuan Dan stage. In the future, let’s look for more opportunities to collaborate.” The man cheerfully replied, a tone of subservience in his voice. Two years ago, Lin Mang successfully advanced to Heavenly Yuan level and became the third Heavenly Yuan practitioner in the Lin Family. Over these two years, he was heavily favoured by the family and he now controls the finances of the entire Lin Family.

In comparison, Lin Xiao, had almost been forgotten after being an invalid for many years.

Even though Lin Mang knew those words were merely flattery, the corners of his mouth still formed into a smile.

“Father rest assured. Later when Lin Dong is thrashed publicly, third-uncle’s expression will definitely worsen.” Sensing his father’s unhappiness, Lin Hong, who was sitting behind Lin Mang, reassuringly told his father.

“En.”

Upon hearing these words, Lin Mang smiled again as he slowly nodded his head.

“That guy is so irksome.”

Qing Tan, who was sitting beside Lin Xiao, unhappily complained after she saw Lin Mang’s deliberate provocations.

“They are on the winning side, for now.”

Lin Xiao shook his head, undisturbed by Lin Mang. Just as he was about to continue, he suddenly turned towards the main entrance. There was a large crowd currently streaming in. Leading the pack, was an old man with headful of white hair and dressed in embroidered robes. He had an impressively robust aura and at this moment he was scanning the training chambers.

This man, was the current head of the Lin Family, and also Lin Xiao's father plus Lin Dong's grandfather, Lin Zhentian.

Following closely behind Lin Zhentian, was a middle-aged man. At his side, stood Lin Xia, whose slim and elegant figure naturally drew the gazes of several young men.

As Lin Zhentian appeared, the commotion in the training chambers intensified as everyone hurriedly rose to pay their respects. After all, Lin Zhentian was considered as a legend in Qingyang Town. After he arrived here, he single handedly built the Lin Family. Therefore, his methods and capabilities have left a strong impression on many people.

Lin Zhentian cheerfully greeted the VIPs before coming to a halt in the middle of the VIP area. However, just as he stopped, he spotted Lin Xiao a short distance away, causing the former to be startled for a moment. Lin Zhentian quickly recovered and swiftly walked over

“Father.”

As he saw Lin Zhentian approaching, Lin Xiao's fists involuntarily tightened, as he stood up and respectfully greeted his father.

“You are finally willing to come and visit me?”

As he looked at Lin Xiao, who was in front of him, Lin Zhentian offhandedly asked, a complicated emotion in his eyes.

In the past, Lin Xiao was the son that Lin Zhentian had dedicated the most effort to. Even though the former's eventual defeat had disappointed him, the most disappointing fact was Lin Xiao's descent into despondency after the defeat.

The old man was as stubborn as his son. After Lin Xiao's descent into despondency, the downhearted Lin Zhentian never initiated a meetup as well regardless of how much he missed his son in his heart.

"Father, I am sorry." Lin Xiao softly muttered. He knew that Lin Zhentian was extremely disappointed by his years of despondency.

"Grandpa..."

Qing Tan and Lin Dong, who were standing at one side, also hurriedly greeted their grandfather.

"Ahh, its Dong-er and Qing Tan. You kids have really grown..." Upon hearing their voices, a smile resurfaced on Lin Zhentian's face. As he gently stroked their heads, he gave the image of a rather kindly and doting grandfather.

"Its good that you have now finally come out. At least, you bothered to visit me before I have to enter my coffin." Lin Zhentian said, as he turned his gaze back towards Lin Xiao. As he

spoke, Lin Dong could feel a slight tremble from the old man's hand. It seems like in that aged heart, he was not as calm as he appeared to be.

“Haha, Father. Now that Third-Brother has finally decided to appear, let's spare him the nagging. After all, there are still many guests around.” The middle-aged man who was following behind Lin Zhentian remarked with a smile.

Lin Zhentian sighed, taking one more glance at Lin Xiao, the former finally went to seat himself.

“Da-ge (Big brother).” Lin Xiao gratefully thanked the middle-aged man.

The middle-aged man smiled as he nodded his head, before proceeding to pat Lin Dong's shoulder and said: “Dong-er, make sure you do not embarrass your father in today's competition.”

“Yes, 1st uncle.”

Lin Dong nodded in response. This man was his oldest uncle and his name was Lin Ken. Besides that, he was also Lin Xia's father.

As he recalled Lin Xia, Lin Dong immediately turned to see the young lady standing behind the middle-aged man waving her tiny fists at him in a show of support.

After Lin Ken and Lin Xiao exchanged pleasantries, Lin Ken

brought Lin Xia back to their respective seats. Soon after, the crowd finally settled back into their respective seats and the noise in the training chambers gradually began to die down.

Everyone was intently staring at the Clan Head, Lin Zhentian.

Lin Family Competition had officially begun!

Chapter 21: Lin Yun

Under the attentive gazes of the crowd, Lin Zhentian stood up and cupped his hands together as a sign of respect to the VIP booth. With a bright smile, his clear voice rang out: “Today is the Family Competition of my Lin Family. Thank you everyone for coming to support us. Everyone here is a familiar friend so this old man shall not tarry any further, let us go straightaway to the main event.”

As the last word fell from his mouth, Lin Zhentian looked to Lin Ken who was beside him. The latter also smiled and nodded before walking to the huge open space in the training chambers and taking out a bamboo tube. Many smaller sticks with words inscribed on them filled the bamboo tube.

“Old rules, draw lots to determine your opponent. All of the little brats who want to participate in the Family Competition come out and draw your lots.”

Hearing Lin Ken’s instructions, one after another, tens of figures appeared in the open space and drew a bamboo lot from the bamboo tube in Lin Ken’s hand.

“There are five platforms here, those who drew the front five numbers will start first.” When all the participants had drawn a lot, Lin Ken smiled as he pointed towards the five stone platforms behind him.

Lin Dong glanced at the bamboo lot in his hand, painted on it was the white figure of the number ‘four’. Without the slightest

hesitation, he straightaway walked to the fourth stone platform. After he had stepped onto the platform, a round thing also climbed up, at which Lin Dong could not help but roll his eyes.

“Lin Changqiang, why is it you.” Lin Dong helplessly gazed at the tubby Lin Changqiang before him.

“I didn’t want this either.....” Lin Changqiang scowled miserably. After Lin Dong had defeated Lin Shan previously, Lin Changqiang understood that the current Lin Dong could not be compared to before. It was most likely that Lin Changqiang was not even considered an opponent for Lin Dong. Yet the lots had already been drawn, and Lin Changqiang could not withdraw either else his father would never let him off when he returned.

Lin Dong shook his head, pity on his face: “Don’t worry, I will go gentle on you.”

“.....” Lin Changqiang was speechless, a little bit of bitterness in his expression.

The two resigned themselves to their fate as they exchanged a glance. Below, seeing that the first batch were all on stage, Lin Ken waved his hand and shouted: “Let the Family Competition begin!”

As Lin Ken’s shout faded, the mood in the training chambers abruptly erupted in a frenzy. On the few stone platforms, figures flashed before finally colliding together in sudden ferocity.

“Heh heh, I had also advanced to Tempered Body 4th Layer two months ago. Lin Dong, you’d better take care too!”

Hearing the signal, Lin Changqiang chuckled as his body suddenly jolted. The folds of originally soft blubber unexpectedly hardened substantially. Following which he stamped ferociously off the ground and flew forward like a huge meat bullet.

As that amusing sight was reflected in Lin Dong’s eyes, he involuntarily broke into a laugh. In this moment, Lin Changqiang’s rapidly approaching body suddenly turned and a thick right leg rather violently lashed at Lin Dong.

“Level 1 martial art, Rock Splitting Leg?”

Lin Dong was somewhat surprised as he felt the wind from Lin Changqiang’s decently renowned leg style. To think that this guy had actually practised martial arts! Yet to the current Lin Dong, just this little was of no threat at all.

Lin Dong’s arm agilely stretched forward and bypassed Lin Changqiang’s whipping leg before lightly tapping on his thigh.

“Ah!”

Lin Changqiang cried out as his now unstable self fell and landed on his butt.

After striking down Lin Changqiang with one palm, Lin Dong

once again lifted his fist as if he were preparing to send it chopping down at his opponent. Lin Changqiang immediately held his hands over his head and called out: “I admit defeat!”

“Lin Dong wins.”

Below the stone platform, Lin Ken grinned while shaking his head. Soon after, he shifted his somewhat astonished gaze to look at Lin Dong. Although Lin Changqiang could not be considered outstanding in the Lin Family, he had still managed to reach Tempered Body 4th Layer. Though the palm from Lin Dong had looked casual enough, the fact was that it had landed on the spot where Lin Changqiang’s strength was the most scattered. If it was just a fluke, then nothing can be said, however if it was intentional, then Lin Dong who was already armed with such discerning eyes at a young age was truly a force to be reckoned with.

After hearing Lin Ken’s declaration, some of the gazes in the training chambers also turned to rest upon Lin Dong. Although they were slightly flabbergasted, in the end they did not pay too much attention to what had happened. After all, Lin Changqiang’s strength was only average in the Lin Family. Winning over him was not a very huge achievement.

Lin Dong did not take much notice of these gazes, his own eyes turned towards another stone platform just in time to see Lin Hong absent-mindedly blowing his opponent off the stage with a single strike of his palm.

Easily dispatching his opponent, Lin Hong also sensed Lin Dong’s

gaze and turned to lock eyes with the latter, the corners of his mouth raising to form a sneer.

Lin Dong shot one last glance at Lin Hong before withdrawing his gaze and dragging Lin Changqiang off the stage.

Lin Dong did not meet any problematic opponents in the first round, thus after Lin Changqiang, Lin Dong once again won the match. Advancing to the top ten with nothing to write home about. Due to his easy victories in both matches, Lin Dong did not reveal his excessively astonishing strength, thus many people believed that good luck was all there was to Lin Dong.

In contrast to Lin Dong's dull matches, Lin Hong and Lin Xia had become the main stars in the training chambers. From start to end, the two had beaten their opponents in a single move. These overwhelming victories made everyone understand that the strength that these two possessed had by far exceeded the rest of the younger generation of the Lin Family.

"I'm afraid that Lin Hong has really attained Tempered Body 7th Layer....." Seated in the audience, Lin Xiao concluded while nodding after seeing how easily Lin Hong had fared in both of his matches.

At these words, concern surfaced on Qing Tan's tiny face. She still remembered that what Lin Hong had said that day: If he achieved a good result in the Family Competition, he would ask grandfather to be engaged to her. When that time comes, if father was not willing, maybe he would once again part on bad terms with grandfather.

“Don’t worry, nothing will happen.”

Seeing the worry on Qing Tan’s tiny face, Lin Dong smiled as he lightly patted her arm to console her.

“En.” Qin Tang slightly inclined her head. A while later, she asked: “Who do you think Lin Dong-ge’s will face next? If you win the next match, you will advance to the top five.....”

Lin Dong grinned though he did not really care. His current strength was more than enough to face any of the younger generation in the Lin Family.

“Let the second round of the competition begin, Lin Dong.”

Lin Ken’s eyes turned to gaze at Lin Dong before indicating to the big stone platform in the middle. Because they had already reached the selection of the top ten, no matter what, it would be more exciting than the previous round. Thus there were no longer five matches occurring simultaneously. Instead, competition would go match by match, allowing the audience absolute clarity.

At Lin Ken’s voice, Lin Dong lightly sighed before quickly walking towards the stone platform.

“Lin Dong-ge, you can do it.”

Behind him, Qing Tan waved her tiny fists in the air while aiding him with a rallying cry of support.

Within the training chambers, several other gazes also turned towards Lin Dong, a hint of curiosity and expectation in their eyes. Although Lin Dong's reputation in the Lin Family was incomparable to the brilliance of Lin Xia and Lin Hong, his father was after all once the most talented in the whole Lin Family. As they thought back to the past Family Competition, they recalled that Lin Xiao had effortlessly been crowned number one. Exactly how much of that capability will his son show in today's competition?

From the VIP booth, Lin Zhentian and the rest also locked their eyes onto Lin Dong. A similar curiosity in their hearts.

Under the attentive watch of the crowd, Lin Dong walked up the stone platform. When he reached his spot, Lin Ken looked to the competition list in his hands as his brows slightly furrowed. After a little hesitation, he read out the second name: "Lin Yun."

Hearing this name, a small uproar emerged in the training chambers. Some of the younger generation of the Lin Family turned to look at Lin Dong with sympathy.

Lin Dong was also stunned by this name, evidently somewhat astonished at the thorny problem his opponent will be.

Like Lin Xia and Lin Hong, Lin Yun was considered as one of the elite among the younger generation of the Lin Family. Both

parents were from the Lin Family but had died at the hands of bandits. Thus he had become uncommunicative since a young age, yet he was quite gifted. It was heard that two months ago, he had condensed a Yuan Power Seed in his body, becoming the third one, after Lin Xia and Lin Hong, to reach Tempered Body 6th Layer among the younger generation of the Lin Family.

This opponent was going to be somewhat troublesome.

Lin Dong licked his lips as a fire gradually burned in his eyes. This was exactly the kind of opponent he needed!

Chapter 22: Crowd Stunning Martial Arts

“Heh heh, that chap is really unlucky.....”

Lin Shan inwardly rejoiced at the misfortune that had fallen upon Lin Dong, while gazing at the latter who stood on the stone platform. To a certain extent, Lin Yun was not inferior to Lin Hong. In fact, if they both were given the same treatment, it would be difficult to say who would be stronger in the future. Now that Lin Dong had actually met Lin Yin in this round, it seems like Lin Dong's competition journey would be cut short here.

“Too bad, I had originally planned to teach him a lesson personally. Looks like there's no need now.” Lin Shan snickered as lazily remarked.

“To think that his opponent would be Lin Yun.”

When Lin Xiao heard about Lin Dong's current matchup, the former could not help but furrow his brows. Clearly, this name was not foreign to him.

On one side, Qing Tan tightly clenched her fists, as a worried look surfaced on her tiny face.

“Don't be too worried, even if he loses to Lin Yun, he would still have made the most of a bad situation. After all, Lin Dong has only trained for a much shorter period than him.” Lin Xiao remarked. After he had recovered from his injuries, he had naturally become much less strict on Lin Dong.

Upon hearing these words, Qing Tan did not say anything. As her pupils shifted to stare at the young man on the stone platform, even though she did not know why, in her heart, she was anticipating a different outcome.....

“Lin Dong-ge will not lose so easily.....”

After Lin Ken announced the opponent, a youngster dressed in ash-colored clothes silently emerged from the crowd, before walking up the stone platform.

This youngster was rather skinny, yet his gaze was as penetrating as an eagle's. Looking at him, you could tell that he was not only wise but that he also possessed an unwavering determination.

Having witnessed his parents meet a violent death at the hands of bandits, the youngster had inevitably matured earlier than his peers.

“Lin Yun.” The youngster dressed in ash-colored clothes slowly announced his name as he faced Lin Dong.

“Lin Dong.” Lin Dong courteously replied, as he solemnly cupped one fist in his other hand, giving his opponent the respect he deserved. Although he had never had any contact with Lin Yun before, Lin Dong rather admired the latter.

“I will not hold back.” Lin Yun warned Lin Dong as he stared at

the latter.

“Thank you.” Lin Dong smiled.

Upon witnessing this sight, Lin Xiao was slightly stunned, though he recovered shortly after. As he stared intently at Lin Dong, he slowly released a sigh. On the former’s fists, an extremely weak radiance flickered, signalling that he would use Yuan Power.

“Since both of you are here, let the match begin.” Lin Ken anxiously glanced at Lin Dong before he waved his hand and shouted.

“Thump!”

Just as Lin Ken’s voice faded, Lin Yun’s eyes narrowed. In a single step, he forcefully charged at Lin Dong, as he gripped his five fingers into a fist and directly attacked Lin Dong’s chest.

Faced with Lin Yun’s attack, Lin Dong did not retreat. Rather, to the astonishment of the crowd, he also took a step forward as his right palm quickly extended to catch Lin Yun’s fist. As Lin Dong’s palm collided against Lin Yun’s fist, the latter was unexpectedly blown backwards upon impact.

Just as his fist was deflected, Lin Yun’s body stance abruptly shifted, effectively evading the palm that Lin Dong had opportunistically threw in his way. Clenching both fists together, he suddenly extended them to smash onto Lin Dong’s face. Layer

upon layer of fist images were like a torrent of huge hailstones falling from the sky. That kind of power was not one that any sane man would dare to clash against.

“Falling Rock Fist?”

This familiar fist technique caused Lin Dong to raise his eyebrows. He had seen Lin Shan execute this set of fist techniques before, yet compared to the one Lin Yun had used, Lin Shan’s fist technique would appear to be riddled with flaws.

“Huff.....”

Spitting out a breath of air through his throat, Lin Dong knew in his heart that the power of Falling Rock Fist would only grow stronger in a prolonged fight, making it even harder to deal with at the later stages. Thus, he understood that he could not afford to back away now.

Since he could not retreat, he could only face it head on!

“Pa Pa Pa Pa Pa.....”

With a serene expression on his face, Lin Dong’s palms tightened into fists. Immediately, a series of crisp echoes sounded out from the top of the stone platform. All in all, there were eight echoes!

Eight echo Penetrating Fist!

Upon witnessing this sight, many people in the crowd were slightly alarmed. They never expected that Lin Dong would be able to master Penetrating Fist to such a degree at this age.

“This brat, to think that he has made such progress.....” Lin Xiao was also shocked at Lin Dong’s sudden display, though soon after, a cheerful look surfaced on his face.

“Yes, not bad.....”

In the VIP booth, Lin Zhentian stroked his beard, slowly nodding.. Being able to utilize the eighth echo of Penetrating Fist at such an age was a pretty impressive accomplishment.

“Yet the force behind Lin Yun’s Falling Rock Fist is also extremely strong, and it even has the support of Yuan Power. Hence, even though the eighth echo Penetrating Fist is powerful, it is still going to be difficult to overpower the former...”

Though he was thoroughly amazed, Lin Zhan Tian still maintained a discerning eye as he assessed the situation, while muttering to himself.

“Pa!”

However, just as Lin Zhentian’s words faded, another clear and crisp sound reverberated in the air. In that instance, the entire training chamber lapsed into a moment of silence.

Ninth echo!

The pinnacle of Penetrating Fist!

Swish!

In a flash, every member of the crowd immediately turned towards Lin Dong. This time, they managed to spot a weak glow flickering on Lin Dong's fist.

Yuan Power! Tempered Body 6th Layer!

“Crack!”

Cracks emerged on the teacup in Lin Xiao's hand, as he blankly stared at the young man on the stone platform. The ninth echo Penetrating Fist? Tempered Body 6th Layer?

Lin Dong.....since when did he become this powerful?

“Brilliant!”

As he sat on the Clan Head's seat, Lin Zhen Tien was briefly silent, before he slowly uttered out the compliment. Everyone who knew him personally, understood that the strength Lin Dong displayed caused him to be extremely satisfied.

Standing in a corner, Lin Mang's expression darkened. He kept his lips tightly sealed and did not utter a single word. Standing behind him, Lin Hong's brow also slightly furrowed.

“This brat really has some skills.....”

“Thump!”

Under the crowd's stupefied gazes, like a huge boulder, Lin Dong's fist crashed against both of Lin Yun's fists. A tremendous blow erupted as the latter's body flew away like a kite whose string had broke, before finally landing on the ground just outside the perimeter of the stone platform.

“Crash.....”

Seeing that Lin Dong had blew away Lin Yun with just one punch, the surrounding crowd burst into an uproar. Those who had known Lin Dong from before, had their mouths wide open, as they were clearly unable to believe that he had made such astounding progress in merely half a year.

Lin Ken was likewise stunned by the strength that Lin Dong had displayed. A short period later, he finally hastily opened his mouth and announced the results.

“Lin Dong is the victor!”

The training chambers abruptly exploded into applause and cheers as they finally understood that Lin Dong had reached this stage unscathed not through luck, but by the genuine strength he possessed.

Lin Dong watched the roaring crowd from his spot on the stone platform, as a small smile formed on his face. He leapt off the stone platform and extended a hand to Lin Yun: “Are you alright?”

“Penetrating Fist ninth echo and Tempered Body 6th Layer. My defeat is justified.” Lin Yun looked at Lin Dong with a smile also on his face. He continued: “If there is ever an opportunity, I would like to spar with you again.”

Finishing his words, Lin Yun did not linger and instead turned to leave.

Gazing at Lin Yun’s back, Lin Dong also smiled. Towards him, he had quite a favorable impression. If there was a chance in the future, perhaps they could get to know each other better.

However, before that, he still had to finish Lin Hong off, or else he would continue to harass Qing Tan.....

Lin Dong turned his head and cast his gaze toward Lin Hong’s position, only to see that the latter was also looking back at him with faint disdain in his expression.

Chapter 23: The Final Three

“Lin Dong-ge, that was brilliant!”

As Lin Dong was walking back to his seat, Qing Tan excitedly exclaimed while she stuck her tiny thumbs out in a thumbsup.

“You little brat, you’ve hidden it well.” Lin Xiao said, with a smile on his face. Nonetheless, Lin Xiao did not scold his son as he was simply too astonished by Lin Dong’s current strength.

Furthermore, Lin Dong’s stellar performance today had caused Lin Xiao’s face to dazzle with happiness. The excitement in his heart, was even greater than the day where his injuries healed.

“Hehe”

Lin Dong humbly scratched his head as he chuckled. When he realized that Lin Xiao was not going to pursue this matter further, he secretly heaved a sigh of relief.

After Lin Dong’s duel ended, the competition resumed. The top ten contestants were all fairly famous members among the younger generation in the Lin Family. In fact, most of them were at Tempered Body 5th Layer or above. Therefore, their duels were naturally quite exciting to watch, thus from time to time, the crowd would burst into cheers.

Five rounds were quickly over. As predicted, Lin Xia and Hong

were able to easily secure their victory thanks to their overwhelming strength. Besides them, Lin Dong and two other outstanding youths in the Lin Family made it through to the final five.

As the final five were announced, the atmosphere in the training chambers heated up. Everyone knew that the following matches were the true highlights of the competition.

After drawing lots, one lucky person managed to draw the empty lot. This time, Lin Dong's opponent was a young man named Lin Ting. He was reportedly at Tempered Body 6th Layer, though this did not pose much of a threat to Lin Dong.

The two of them swiftly proceeded to their fight after drawing lots and the end result was hardly surprising. Lin Dong's Penetrating Fist Ninth Echo forcibly pushed Lin Ting off the stone platform, even though the latter utilized his full strength to resist.

Thus , Lin Dong easily advanced to the final three.

Nothing special happened in this duel. Therefore, after it ended, the crowd instantly turned their attention towards the upcoming duel.

The next matchup piqued everyone's interest, even Lin Dong was interested. On account of the fact that it was Lin Xia against Lin Hong.

The two of them were considered as the most elite among the younger generation in Lin Family. In fact, most people predicted that either one of them will win this Family Competition.

However, the two of them were to now clashed unexpectedly before the final round, this exchange would be exciting indeed.....

“Lin Xia.”

Lin Ken hesitantly announced after he saw that both of them had drawn the same lot.

Upon hearing Lin Ken’s call, Lin Xia acknowledged in her lovable voice. With a twist of her tiny waist, she floated up onto the stone platform like a butterfly. Her slender and valiant look, drew the attention of several youngsters.

As Lin Xia ascended onto the stone arena, Lin Hong also elegantly leaped onto the arena. Dressed in white, he appeared handsome and refined, at this sight, several people in the crowd lightly nodded their heads in approval.

“Lin Xia-jie, please go easy on me.” Lin Hong respectfully bowed towards her.

“If I hold back, the one who loses will likely be me.” Lin Xia grinned. A rare look of concentration in her eyes, she knew that based on Lin Hong’s strength, she will most likely have to fight with everything that she had.

Lin Hong smiled as a fire burned in his eyes. Lin Xia could be counted as the most outstanding member among the younger generation of the Lin Family. If he could defeat her today, he will be able to claim the number one position.

“Let the duel begin!”

Standing below the platform, Lin Ken shouted as he signaled for the match to begin.

Just as Lin Ken finished his announcement, a faint glow emerged from the bodies of the two contestants. This was Yuan Power.

“Tempered Body 7th Layer...”

As they gazed at the rather dense glow emerging from their bodies, many people in the crowd gasped in surprise. Even though they had their suspicions after watching the previous duels, they were still amazed upon witnessing this sight.

To be able to advance to Tempered Body 7th Layer at such a tender age. This clearly showed the latent potential they possessed. If they were given proper training, they will definitely have a bright future ahead.

On his seat, Lin Zhentian had a content smile on his face as he witnessed this sight. The more stellar the younger generation was, the happier he felt.

“Lin Xia-jie, watch out!”

As the glow on his body flickered, Lin Hong's expression turned deadly serious as he abruptly leapt forward. A devastating force could be felt from his two palms which he swung in a horizontal arc towards Lin Xia.

Faced with the biting cold wind from Lin Hong's palm, Lin Xia gently took a step back. Her long and elegant finger came together and curled slightly in the shape of a hawk's mouth. She struck heavily on the back of Lin Hong's palms, causing them to fall downwards and avoiding the attack.

“Eight Desolations Palm!”

Just as his palm was deflected, Lin Hong let out a growl. The force behind his palm turned ferocious as he continuously rained blows at Lin Xia's head. The sound of his hands breaking through the air was indeed impressive.

As she was being assaulted by the aggressive palm technique, Lin Xia lightly frowned. She aligned two fingers together, and like a sword, she deftly bypassed Lin Hong's palms and stabbed towards his body, causing the latter to have no choice but to bring back his hands to defend.

On the stone platform, two figures intertwined as they fought vigorously while constantly exchanged blows with their palms and fingers. With help from Yuan Power, each blow was amplified,

captivating the audience's attention.

“Lin Dong-ge, who do you think will win?” Qing Tan nervously asked as she involuntarily tightened her tiny fists at the intense duel.

“Hard to say.....”

Lin Dong hesitated before he finally shook his head. Lin Hong has clearly mastered Eight Desolations Palm as the force generated by his palm techniques were extremely aggressive and packed a huge punch. However, Lin Xia did not lose out to the former. In fact, the martial arts that she used was the Level 2 martial arts, Spirit Finger Sword.

Even though that type of martial arts did not look formidable, if it was properly mastered, one's fingers will become a sword. Therefore, even Lin Hong did not dare to take a hit from her.

As such, it was very difficult to ascertain who would become the eventual victor. Nonetheless, in Lin Dong's heart, he hoped that Lin Xia would win.....

While they spoke, the battle on the stone arena gradually intensified to a climax. Palms and fists collided, causing a series of deep sounds continuously rang out.

This exchange lasted for nearly ten minutes as the glow on their bodies burned brightly. Evidently, they had pushed the Yuan

Power within their bodies to the maximum extent.

Just as the intensity of the glow reached its peak, the two of them took a step back in unison. Soon after, both of their palms suddenly reached out and collided together under the watchful gaze of the crowd.

“Bang”

An explosive bang sounded out on the platform as both of them were jolted apart by the impact. Both of their feet desperately tried to claw onto the platform, but in the end, both of them fell off at the same time...

After witnessing both of them fall off together, a commotion erupted in the training chambers. Evidently, no one was expecting this outcome...

“Haha, not bad, not bad at all...”

On his seat, Lin Zhentian could not help but nod his head in satisfaction after he witnessed that Lin Hong was able to go toe to toe with Lin Xia in their spectacular duel. Lin Mang, who was sitting beside him, let out a bright smile as he smugly turned to look at Lin Xiao.

“This match shall be judged as a draw. Since there are only four people left, if there are no objections, Lin Xia and Lin Hong will both take first place, whereas Lin Dong and Lin Chen, will be

ranked as second and third respectively. Of course, if anyone still wants to compete and exchange pointers, please step forward now.....”

Lin Zhentian stood up and announced with a smile. At this juncture, the rankings for the Family Competition had largely been decided and any further duels should likely make no difference.

Upon hearing Lin Zhentian’s words, the crowd nodded in agreement.

“That fellow is number one...”

Lin Dong frowned as he turned to look at Qing Tan, only to discover that she had tightly gripped her tiny fists. Plastered on her delicate and tiny face, was a look of worry.

After hearing Lin Zhentian’s announcement, Lin Hong’s smile brightened. Turning his gaze towards Lin Dong and Qing Tan, the corners of his mouth lifted into a sneer. Soon after, he took a step forward and prepared to announce his intention for an engagement request, as they say: strike while the iron is hot.

However, right before Lin Hong announced his request, Lin Dong, who had been observing the former, suddenly stood up with a dark expression on his face. His voice reverberated in the training chamber.

“Lin Hong-biao-ge, Lin Dong is untalented. Could you please give

me some pointers?”

Chapter 24: Complete Victory

The sudden voice caused the training chamber to lapse into silence and one by one, astonished gazes turned to rest upon Lin Dong.

“Dong-er, what are you doing?”

Lin Xiao hastily asked, also shocked by Lin Dong’s actions. Though Lin Dong’s performance today had exceeded his expectations by far, when all is said and done, his son still had a while to go before reaching Lin Hong’s level. Armed with only Tempered Body 6th Layer and nine echo Penetrating Punch, it was not possible for Lin Dong to beat the Lin Hong who had already reached Tempered Body 7th Layer!

“Lin Dong-ge, don’t go!”

Quickly regaining her wits, anxiety replaced the shock on Qing Tan’s tiny face. She knew that Lin Dong’s sudden actions were likely all for her sake.

“Don’t worry father, I only want to exchange some pointers with Lin Hong-biao-ge. Even if I lose, you will not lose face.....” Lin Dong grinned as he said.

These words knocked Lin Xiao out of his daze. He hesitated for a while before grudgingly nodding his head, cautioning his son: “Be careful.”

Lin Dong nodded in reply. He patted Qing Tan's tiny head before turning to walk into the arena under the numerous gazes of the crowd. As he was turning, a sneer flitted across his eyes. If Lin Hong had just been satisfied with obtaining first place, the Lin Dong would not even bother to excessively expose his strength. It's a pity that even with first place, Lin Hong was still greedy for the only thing he would never have! Really, give someone an inch and he'll want a mile...

“Since things have played out this way, don't blame me for thrashing you till you lose the face to mention the engagement ever again.....”

Lin Dong's footsteps stopped at the perimeter of the stone platform as he turned to look at Lin Zhentian, smiling as he inquired: “Grandfather, would it be alright for me to issue a challenge?”

Regaining his wits, Lin Zhentian inspected Lin Dong with an astonished look. Even after Lin Hong's strength had been clearly displayed to Lin Dong, he still dared to issue a challenge. Either Lin Dong was asking for trouble or he had some kind of assurance in himself.

“Looks like he seems to have found some weak point.....”

Suddenly, a faint sense of anticipation appeared in the depths of Lin Zhentian's eyes. In the same competition many years before, Lin Xiao had also distinguished himself in a similar way, causing

Lin Zhentian to finally find hope in returning to the clan.....but no one knew if Lin Dong was able to be like the Lin Xiao from the past and once again give this old man the greatest surprise.

“Normal rules, request for challenge accepted.”

Seeing Lin Zhentian's approval, Lin Dong finally smiled.

“You brat, to think that you would come knocking on trouble's door. Even I had a hard time dealing with the current Lin Hong.” Lin Xia's angry voice sounded out as she stomped towards Lin Dong.

“Now is not the time to show off and act brave.”

Lin Xia was unhappy that she had failed to meet her own expectations and Lin Dong could only chuckle in response. Without a word, his figure leaped up onto the stone platform where Lin Hong was already standing, arms crossed and staring at Lin Dong while sneering.

“Lin Dong, looks like your self confidence has swelled after reaching the top three?” With a forced smile on his face, Lin Hong looked at Lin Dong who now stood before him

“Thus I would like to invite Lin Hong-biao-ge to help me sober up.” Acting as if he did not hear the mockery in Lin Hong's words, Lin Dong replied with a smile.

“It’s my duty.” Lin Hong lazily said.

“1st uncle, can we start?” After one last glance towards Lin Hong, Lin Dong turned to ask Lin Ken who was at the bottom of the platform.

“You.....” Lin Ken opened his mouth as if he had something to say before finally sighing in helplessness. He waved a hand: “Begin.”

As Lin Ken’s voice faded, Lin Hong’s originally lazy expression turned ice-cold. A weak glow bathed his body. He was clearly not going to pull any punches.....

“Lin Dong, I will now show you how huge of a gap there is between us!”

Yuan Power rolled about in his channels as ripples of power spread across Lin Hong’s body. He sneered at Lin Dong before quickly taking two steps forward and appearing before the latter. A cold force on the palm that was heavily thrusting towards Lin Dong.

In the face of Lin Hong’s extremely powerful blow, to everyone’s horror, Lin Dong did not show even the slightest signs of dodging. At this sight, many in the crowd secretly shook their heads, looks like the winner of this match would be decided very soon.....

“Heh heh, to actually initiate a challenge, he is only finding

trouble for himself.”

In the training chamber, Lin Shan smiled, delighted at this turn of events. By his side, Lin Mang was also grinning as he leisurely leaned against the back of his seat and sipped on the tea in his cup.

“Thump!”

Just as the blow was about to make contact with Lin Dong’s chest, Lin Dong finally made his move. He extended his right palm and thrust at Lin Hong’s palm.

To everyone’s surprise, this collision did not end in Lin Hong’s victory. Rather, like an iron tower, Lin Dong’s body unexpectedly endured the blow without budging an inch. It was as if Lin Hong’s blow was completely unable to affect Lin Dong’s in the slightest.

“How can this be?”

This unimaginable scene caused many in the crowd to be flabberghasted. How could the power of Lin Hong’s Tempered Body 7th Layer be unable to force back Lin Dong’s Tempered Body 6th Layer?

Even Lin Hong’s complexion changed at that moment. From what he could feel, Lin Dong’s palm was akin to a thick wall that he could not break through.

And at this instance, he finally felt a sense of unease.

“You are not the only one who is at Tempered Body 7th Layer!”

Lin Dong stared at Lin Hong who was wearing a completely different expression from before, making sure to pronounce each word clearly. As Lin Dong spat out each word, a weak glow emerged from his body; this was due to the undulating Yuan Power! And, this kind of undulation was much stronger than Lin Hong's!

The 7th Layer of Tempered Body!

“Sss.....”

Gazing at the Yuan Power that flickered on Lin Dong's body, gasps suddenly sounded out in the training chambers. As it turns out, Lin Dong's true strength was not at the 6th Layer but the 7th Layer!

No wonder he dared to challenge Lin Hong!

“This repulsive brat.....”

Lin Xiao foolishly gazed at the figure on the stone platform, the expression on his face slowly changing to an extremely excited one. He had yet to digest the amazement Lin Dong had forcefully fed him from before and now, his son had given him yet another heavy blow.....

Below the stage, Lin Xia's jade-like hands also subconsciously moved to cover her tiny mouth, her eyes colored with astonishment.

“7th Layer? So what!”

Lin Hong's constantly changing complexion eventually formed into a sneer. With a shake of his arms, both palms abruptly extended, following which a fierce gale shot forward like a knife, ready to shred a person to pieces.

“Eight Desolations Palm?”

Lin Dong laughed in response to Lin Hong's incoming palm attack. He brandished his own palms and from a tricky angle, Lin Dong bypassed Lin Hong's thrust, quickly slapping down on the latter's arm. Just as this casual looking tap made contact, the power of Lin Hong's ferocious Eight Desolations Palm was suddenly scattered, causing it to weaken.

“That's not the way to use Eight Desolations Palm!”

Having scattered Lin Hong's palm thrust, a small smile danced on Lin Dong's lips. The latter suddenly stretched both palms forward as they cut through the air like a knife through hot butter. Compared to Lin Hong, the force behind was much stronger and ferocious.

“You actually know Eight Desolations Palm too?!”

Lin Hong cried out involuntarily at the familiarity of Lin Dong's palm technique. Just as his voice faded, he became aware of some subtle differences, the might of Lin Dong's Eight Desolations Palm was much more tyrannical than the one he had displayed previously.

“How is this possible?!”

This discovery caused Lin Hong's complexion to turn somewhat pale. He had practised Eight Desolations Palm for half a year, how could there be such a disparity from Lin Dong's?

“I refuse to believe it!”

With a face as white as sheet, a wild fury flashed in Lin Hong's eyes. He once again executed Eight Desolations Palm, but this time, to the best of his abilities. The Yuan Power in his body madly gushed out of his palm as he hacked at Lin Dong in anger!

The palm hummed with raw energy, causing the crowd to be emotionally moved.

Faced with Lin Hong's final desperate counter-attack, Lin Dong maintained his calm as his palm strike suddenly evolved to incorporate a slight trace of gentleness before meeting Lin Hong's blow in mid-air.

In the moment they contacted, Lin Dong's arm strangely jolted as

an exceedingly violent strength rushed forth like a tsunami.

“Thump!”

The crowd watched as Lin Hong’s body was unexpectedly blown away like a kite which had been cut loose and with a final stagger, Lin Hong’s sorry figure tumbled off the stone platform.....

An absolute silence dominated the training chambers, no one could have imagined that the originally first placed Lin Hong had been so cleanly dispatched by Lin Dong’s hands.....

“Good.....excellent.....”

Lin Zhentian gazed blankly at the youngster on the stone platform. A split second later, he slowly sat down, mumbling to himself as an uncontrollable ecstasy and emotion sprang up in his eyes.

Chapter 25: Accepting a Position

The training chambers were deadly silent. One by one, stupefied gazes came to rest upon the youngster on the stone platform, paralyzed in their seats with astonishment and unable to utter a single word.

“To think that he actually won.....”

Lin Xiao was also stumped at this outcome. A split second later, his body started to tremble violently as an ecstatic look surfaced on his face.

The delightful surprises that Lin Dong had delivered today was simply overwhelming.

Below the stone platform, Lin Xia lightly patted her chest as if to ease the shock in her heart, her eyes nailed onto Lin Dong. Previously, her bout with Lin Hong had only ended in a draw, yet Lin Dong had just triumphed over Lin Hong. Indirectly, this implied that even she, could not defeat Lin Dong.

In fact, the true victor of this competition could be said to be the dark horse, Lin Dong!

“He’s truly his father’s son.....” Beside Lin Xia, Lin Ken also slowly murmured.

On the ground just at the fringe of the stone platform, Lin Hong

sat with a pale face. His vacant daze evidently showed that he was still unable to come to terms with this abrupt reversal. Never in his wildest dreams, did he imagine that he would actually lose to Lin Dong, who he had always treated as mere dirt beneath his feet.

He simply could not accept this end result.

“Impossible!”

The surrounding gazes caused Lin Hong to feel as if his back was pricked by countless needles. His face twitched erratically, as the expression on his face rapidly fluctuated. Suddenly, he let out a roar of anger as the sole of his foot stamped off the ground, and he dashed back onto the platform and prepared to attack Lin Dong.

Lin Dong’s brows knitted together. Although the competition has ended, Lin Hong still stubbornly refused to accept the outcome. Instantly, he took one step forwards, and like a pair of metal pincers, both of his palms readied themselves to stop Lin Hong’s in his tracks. Just as he planned to push Lin Hong off the platform again, a sudden shout abruptly sounded out.

“Get lost!”

A figure descended from the skies, his hands like an eagle’s claws as they grabbed at Lin Dong. Alarmed, the latter hastily withdrew his arms, yet the other party refused to let him off as the ‘claws’ went directly for Lin Dong’s shoulders.

“Lin Mang!”

This sudden turn of events greatly alarmed the audience. And when he saw the identity of the aggressor, Lin Ken immediately roared out in anger.

“You get lost! Don’t touch my son!”

Before Lin Ken’s roar could fade away, another figure flashed onto the platform and appeared in front of Lin Dong. This figure was Lin Xiao.

“Lin Xiao, do you really think that you can match up to me?” Seeing that Lin Xiao had appeared to protect his son, Lin Mang could not help but sneer. Yuan Power violently flickered at the hollow of his palm as it furiously swatted at Lin Xiao, slicing apart the air and leaving a thunderous sound in its wake.

“Get lost!”

Faced with Lin Mang’s attack, Lin Xiao’s expression slightly darkened. Surprisingly, he neither dodged nor ducked, instead he directly countered Lin Mang’s attack with his fist.

“Thump!”

A strong wave erupted with the clash at its epicentre, as every speck of dust was cleanly blown off the stone arena. The entire crowd was unexpectedly stunned once again, as they saw Lin Mang

being forcibly pushed back!

Lin Mang, who was at Heavenly Yuan level, was unexpectedly pushed back!

At this moment, Lin Ken, who was just about to intervene, froze in his steps. On his seat, the anger and agitation that was just about to explode from Lin Zhentian also likewise came to a screeching halt.

“Your strength?!”

Lin Mang stumbled as he tried to steady his body. Yet, at this moment, the surface of his heart was like a raging storm churning the seas. A terrified look on his face as he stared at Lin Xiao.

“When injuries have healed, strength will naturally follow and recover. You dare to cause such a scene at the Family Competition for the younger generation? Do you really think that us father and son are so easily bullied?” Lin Xiao said icily.

“Third-brother, you’ve regained your strength?”

At the bottom of the platform, delight lit up on Lin Ken’s face. A Heavenly Yuan level practitioner was an exceedingly important factor that determined a faction’s power. Currently, in the entire Lin Family, including himself, there were only three people who had reached the Heavenly Yuan stage. However, even such a small number allowed the Lin Family to command a rather substantial

power in Qingyang Town. Now that Lin Xiao had made a complete recovery and his strength had returned, their Lin Family would have one more Heavenly Yuan practitioner.

Hence, the guests in the training chambers also were also greatly shaken by this news. After all, they understood that from today onwards, the power of the Lin Family will rise dramatically.

On his seat, Lin Zhentian finally regained his wits and hastily leaped onto the platform. He grabbed Lin Xiao's arm, and after sensing the surging Yuan Power in the latter's body, a hearty laughter burst forth.

“Good, in the end, you did not let me down!”

Lin Zhentian heavily patted Lin Xiao's shoulders. To one side, Lin Dong could see that the old man's eyes were somewhat red. It looks like Lin Zhentian was exceptionally moved by this.

“Lin Mang, even in such a public place, you actually dare to intervene because of your personal feelings? Do you really want to utterly disgrace the Lin Family?” Lin Zhentian's tearful state did not last for long as he suddenly turned and sternly glanced at Lin Mang, a red hot anger in his voice.

Hearing Lin Zhentian raise his voice, Lin Mang's expression slightly changed. In the Lin Family, Lin Zhentian's authority was absolute and he was a respectable person who always kept his word. Even though Lin Mang had advanced to Heavenly Yuan level, he still did not dare to refute Lin Zhentian and could only

bow his head in silence.

“Father, please let this matter go for now. After all, there are many guests here.” Lin Xiao hurriedly approached and softly muttered.

Lin Zhentian took in a deep breath as he suppressed the rage in heart. Then, with a swipe of his sleeve, he commanded: “I will leave you to settle this situation. Then, all of you will meet me at the backyard!”

As he finished, he immediately turned and left, the heavy thuds of his footsteps betraying the fact that he had yet to simmer down.

Upon witnessing this situation, Lin Ken let out a pained smile as he glanced at Lin Xiao and Lin Mang. After all these years, the two of them were still at constant loggerheads, and they had even involved their children in their dispute...

The Lin Family backyard was considered as an important area in the Lin Family. Under normal circumstances, no outsiders would be allowed to enter.

In a large hall at the backyard, sat several figures. The man sitting right in the center, was a slightly enraged Lin Zhentian. Beside him, were Lin Ken, Lin Xiao, Lin Mang and other key members of the Lin Family.

Lin Dong and Qing Tan, who were sitting beside Lin Xiao, did not

dare to breathe a word in this uneasy atmosphere.

“Lin Mang, you have really outdone yourself. As an elder, you actually attacked one of the younger generation members. Do you want to humiliate our whole Lin Family?” As he glanced at the crowd, Lin Zhentian fiercely barked before he slammed his palm on the table.

“Father, I was impulsive.”

Lin Mang softly apologized as he took in a deep breath. He had been truly traumatized after witnessing Lin Hong’s utter humiliation by Lin Dong. After all, since young he had always been competing with Lin Xiao, and now, this competition had extended to their sons as well.

“Father, second-brother was indeed impulsive. However, please do not be too angry.” Lin Ken sighed, as he was forced to intervene as the oldest brother.

“Third-brother’s injuries have finally healed, and he has returned to the Heavenly Yuan level. This is truly a joyous occasion. You should not be angry.”

Upon hearing these words, Lin Zhentian’s expression softened. As he turned to face Lin Xiao, he suddenly let out a disgruntled snort: “ You should have recovered from your injuries long ago, yet you chose to let your pride stand in the way.”

Lin Xiao nodded his head, forcing a smile.

“Nonetheless, its great news that you have finally recovered. Our Lin Family’s businesses have been greatly expanding, and we lack manpower now. From now on, you should come back and help us out. After all, we are family.” Lin Zhentian remarked.

“Yes.” Lin Xiao nodded his head, after a moment of hesitation. Now that he has recovered his strength, he knew that he ought to return and help the family.

Seeing that Lin Xiao did not decline, Lin Zhentian nodded his head in satisfaction. He hesitated for a moment before saying: “Recently, we have been exceedingly busy at the Blazing Manor. Head over there and help manage that place. If you require assistance, Lin Ken will be there to help.”

Just as these words left Lin Zhentian’s mouth, Lin Mang’s cheek could not help but twitch. The Lin Family owned several businesses in the vicinity of Qingyang Town. However, Blazing Manor was the most crucial one. In fact, every year, the profits from Blazing Manor made up almost 50-60% of the Lin Family’s entire income. Furthermore, this Blazing Manor used to be under his domain...

Though Lin Mang was extremely unhappy, he did not have the guts to oppose Lin Zhentian. Especially since he had only just angered Lin Zhentian.

When he heard that he would be put in charge of Blazing Manor,

Lin Xiao was slightly dazed. Evidently, he knew the importance of this manor to the Lin Family. Nonetheless, after a moment of hesitation, he eventually nodded in agreement.

After finishing his instructions, Lin Zhentian turned to kindly gaze at Lin Dong, Lin Xia and the still somewhat unsightly Lin Hong. With a gentle smile, he said: “Meanwhile, Lin Dong’s performance today was the most outstanding. Truthfully, he should be crowned as number one in this Family Competition. As for the competition prizes, I will assign someone to bring all of you to the Martial Arts Library later on. Do feel free to use all the resources there. If there’s anything else you three need, do not hesitate to tell grandfather. After all, I hope that the three of you can rapidly grow before the Qingyang Town Hunt and achieve a good result to boost the reputation of our Lin Family.”

Upon discovering that they were now permitted into the family’s Martial Arts Library, Lin Dong’s eyes immediately started to shine...

Chapter 26: The Hunt

Ever since the Family Competition ended, it became much more lively on the small hill where Lin Dong lived. Since noon, a constant stream of visitors had arrived to congratulate them. Everyone knew that based on Lin Dong and Lin Xiao's performance, they would definitely rejoin the Lin Family's inner circle, a pretty respectable position.

Faced with so many visitors, Lin Xiao instructed Liu Yan to treat them all hospitably before sending them off.

In the room, four figures gathered for a family dinner. This time, a bright smile was ever present on Liu Yan's face. She did not care much for wealth or power, instead what mattered to her was the wellbeing of Lin Xiao and Lin Dong. For the sake of the two of them, she would gladly sacrifice everything.

"Dong-er, Tempered Body 7th Layer, Penetrating Fist Ninth Echo and a mastery of Eight Desolations Palm that is not inferior to Lin Hong's. The progress you have made is indeed terrifying..." Lin Xiao commented as he laid down his chopsticks onto his bowl.

Upon hearing Lin Xiao's comment, Lin Dong's hand, which was placed under the table, involuntarily trembled. It seems that his insane training speed had aroused a little of Lin Xiao's suspicion.

"I only just advanced to Tempered Body 7th Layer last night before I went to bed. With regards to Penetrating Fist and Eight Desolations Palm, I have been practising them regularly. I don't

really understand why but I seem to learn and master those skills really quickly.” Lin Dong replied in a soft voice as he scratched his head humbly while frowning.

“Oh?”

Lin Xiao was perplexed. His eyebrows furrowed as he stared at Lin Dong’s earnest expression. Some people can indeed master martial arts extremely quickly. In fact, it was reputed that these gifted geniuses can rapidly learn any forms of martial arts taught to them.

Therefore, Lin Xiao could still accept that fact. However, Lin Dong’s Tempered Body training still seemed too speedy. After all, he was only at Tempered Body 2nd Layer half a year ago.

Successively advancing 5 Layers in half a year: This kind of speed was extremely remarkable in Qingyang Town, and even the whole Lin Clan.

“Are you sure you did not take anything in the past half a year?” Lin Xiao asked. Previously, he had suspected that Lin Dong’s body was able to absorb the medicinal properties from elixirs to a much higher degree than most people. However, due to their circumstances, Lin Dong did not have access to high quality elixirs during the last six months.

Therefore, without a ready supply of elixirs, even if he was blessed with the ability to fully utilize them, what use would it be?

“I seem to recall.... Two months ago, when I was training in the woods, I found a golden fruit and ate it. At that time, it did not seem to have any effect... Maybe, it could be due to that...?” Lin Dong replied with a straight face. He constantly blinked his eyes as he acted as if he was trying hard to recall something.

Lin Xiao was at a loss for words while he tried to figure out what exactly the golden fruit was. Soon after, he shook his head helplessly and muttered uncertainly: “Perhaps so... Nevermind. Maybe you really did have the good fortune to eat some elixir-like fruit...”

Based on his expression, it was evident that Lin Xiao knew that something was off with his explanation. However, he decided to stop pursuing the matter. After all, it was good news that Lin Dong’s strength continued to grow.

Seeing that Lin Xiao had stopped pursuing the matter, Lin Dong’s heart secretly heaved a sigh of relief. When the time was right, he had planned to personally tell Lin Xiao about the stone talisman. However, right now he did not want to reveal its existence just yet.

“I was completely stunned when you won first place in today’s Family Competition. However, you must stay humble and remember to persist in your training. It will be the end of the year soon, and the Qingyang Town Hunt will commence. The younger generation of Qingyang Town’s other factions will also be participating. Thus, you must ensure that you do not embarrass the Lin Family.” Lin Xiao seriously remarked.

Lin Dong naturally knew about the upcoming event. The

Qingyang Town Hunt was held once every three years and was arguably the time when Qingyang Town was at its most crowded. Even many from outside the town would join in and witness the festivities.

Of course, whenever one mentions about the Qingyang Town Hunt they will naturally talk about the three major factions in Qingyang Town, the Lei Family, Xie Family and the Raging Blade Dojo.

The Lei Family and Xie Family could be considered as the original Families of Qingyang Town. Therefore, after several generations, they had laid down deep roots within the town and they could be considered as the most well-established factions. With regards to the Raging Blade Dojo, even though they were only established for slightly longer than a decade, they have rapidly caught up in terms of power. In fact, even the Lei and Xie Families knew that the Raging Blade Dojo's current strength was not to be trifled with.

Moreover, this Raging Blade Dojo had a reputation that preceded them. If merchants chose to hire them as bodyguards, it was said that most bandits would definitely opt to steer clear of them.

Below these three major factions, the Lin Family could be considered as the next most powerful faction. In fact, ever since Lin Xiao had recovered his strength, the Lin Family now had the qualifications to stand toe to toe with these three major factions. After all, even the Lei Family, which was one of the most well established faction, only possessed five Heavenly Yuan practitioners.

As for the Qingyang Town Hunt, it was an event jointly held by these three major factions. However, it was not really a “hunt”, but rather a test for the younger generation in each faction.

Of course, this was also a way for each faction to secretly compete with each other.

Naturally, whoever rose above the others in this hunt would bring much glory to their family. The results were determined based on individual comparisons, and whoever could suppress the rest would emerge as the unofficial victor.

Therefore, every faction in the Qingyang Town placed great emphasis on the “hunt”, and in order to secure a good result, they would send their most elite younger generation members to take part. Hence, the intensity of the competition definitely exceeded that of the Family Competition today...

And those opponents, would definitely be stronger than Lin Hong.

The ‘hunt’ was the real deal!

“I understand, Father. I will not rest on my laurels.”

In the house, Lin Dong collected his thoughts as he lifted his head and smiled. He recalled that the Lin Family had performed dismally in the past few “hunts”, and they were thus constantly ridiculed for it. Therefore, Grandpa had placed an exceptional

emphasis on the upcoming hunt.

“Good.”

Lin Xiao nodded his head in contentment and said: “The Lei and Xie Family are both pioneers in this town. Therefore, they often discriminate against the Raging Blade Dojo and us, the Lin Family. All these years, they have been constantly undermining us as they seek to demonstrate their dominance in this town and force us to submit to them.”

At this point, Lin Xiao involuntarily snorted before continuing: “All these years, our Lin Family has been waiting in the wings. Now that my power has been restored, we no longer need to fear them. Therefore, you must work hard and secure a decent result for this hunt and restore our Lin Family’s reputation.”

Lin Dong once again nodded his head.

Upon witnessing this sight, Lin Xiao gently smiled. He then proceeded to hand over an embroidered box to Lin Dong and said: “This was a reward from Grandpa. There are two Grade 3 Elixirs contained within. Besides, you have also gained the qualifications to enter the Martial Arts Library. In the future, if you want to learn any martial arts, you can enter by yourself to take a look around.”

“Two Grade 3 Elixirs?”

As these words entered his ears, Lin Dong's eyes immediately sparkled. Ever since he had fortunately stumbled across a Crystal Vermillion Fruit, he had yet to encounter another Grade 3 Elixir. Therefore, he could not bear to use the two pills that were refined from the Stone Talisman. Now that he had two more Grade 3 Elixirs, he could finally afford to try those pills and experience their effects.

“Alright, it's getting late. Go and get some rest. During this period of time, I will be busy with the Blazing Manor. Therefore, you will have to train hard on your own.” As he saw Lin Dong take the silk box, Lin Xiao waved his hands and instructed.

“Yes.”

Lin Dong nodded his head as he left the room with the embroidered box in hand. He was extremely eager to find out, just how potent the pills refined from Grade 3 Elixirs would be...

Chapter 27: Martial Arts Library

As he slipped back into his room, Lin Dong immediately locked his door before he collapsed against it and heaved a sigh of relief. Soon after, he walked towards his table and opened up the embroidered box.

When he opened the embroidered box, sitting atop of the red silk lining were two stalks of blood-red elixirs, which looked like they were on fire. Meanwhile, a seductive aroma filled the room.

“Flaming Crimson Reishi.”

As he gazed at these two stalks of reishi, a look of delight surfaced on Lin Dong’s face. After all, he knew that these were pretty costly elixirs.

“These two Flaming Crimson Reishi probably costs more than a thousand taels of silver...” Lin Dong gasped. He had never seen such a huge sum of money before.

As Lin Dong gleefully rubbed his palms, he retrieved the Stone Talisman from his chest and gently brought it towards a stalk of Flaming Crimson Reishi.

Upon contact, the stalk of Flaming Crimson Reishi was rapidly drained dry as all the Ling Qi contained was completely swallowed by the Stone Talisman.

Soon after the stalk of Flaming Crimson Reishi was completely drained, three flaming-red pills fell from the Stone Talisman and were instantly scooped up by Lin Dong.

A lukewarm sensation filled his palm as he grabbed the pills. The smile on Lin Dong's face widened as he realized that the potency of the Flaming Crimson Reishi was much stronger than the Crystal Vermillion Fruit that he encountered by chance previously.

After this bountiful harvest, Lin Dong proceeded to feed the Stone Talisman his other stalk of Flaming Crimson Reishi. In the end, the two stalks of Flaming Crimson Reishi were refined into six flaming-red pills.

Lin Dong nodded in satisfaction after keeping these six pills into a bottle. As he sat down on his bed, he took out two other bottles hidden under his pillow. In the first bottle, were two pills refined from the Crystal Vermillion Fruit, while in the second, were ten white Yin Pearls. These Yin Pearls were obtained over this period of time when he used the Stone Talisman to suck out and tame the Chilling Cold in Qing Tan's body.

According to Lin Xiao, these Yin Pearls were extremely precious as the Yin Energy contained within, was very crucial for any Earthly Yuan practitioners. Therefore, Lin Dong planned to save these Yin Pearls for his own consumption when he advances to the Earthly Yuan level.

As he gently held the bottle with the Crystal Vermillion Pills, Lin Dong carefully tipped it over and retrieved one pill. Gritting his teeth, he immediately popped the pill into his mouth. Even though

he felt a heavy pinch of regret, knowing how valuable these items were, he decided that it was more important to raise his strength before anything else.

As the pill entered his body, Lin Dong could vividly feel a stream of pure and potent medicinal power explode within his body.

As the pill took its effect, Lin Dong's body became like a hungry ghost. His muscles and internal organs fervently devoured the pure medicinal effect.

As his body hungrily gorged itself, the Yuan Power Seed that was flowing within his body's inner channels also released a suction force, as it gradually grew while consuming a part of the medicinal effect.

This situation continued for approximately ten minutes. After which, the potent medicinal effect began to weaken. Another half an hour later, Lin Dong finally opened his eyes slowly.

“Such a potent medicinal effect...”

As he opened his eyes, Lin Dong could feel the vigorous energy flowing through his channels and the growth of the Yuan Power Seed. A look of uncontrollable excitement surfaced in his eyes.

This was his first time consuming a pill refined from a Grade 3 Elixir, and its effects were beyond his expectations.

In general, most elixirs would supplement one's body, however due to various reasons, they also lead to unexpected side-effects. However, the pill that Lin Dong just consumed, did not have any side-effect. It was almost as if the Stone Talisman had removed every impurity and flaw in the elixirs during the refining process.

As such, one was now able to fully absorb and benefit from the elixirs consumed.

Therefore, the efficiency of just one particular pill far surpasses that of its respective elixir.

As there was no wastage during the absorption process, the benefits from one pill probably equaled to that of multiple stalks of elixirs from the same grade.

“My Yuan Power Seed is expanding. At this rate, it will not be long before I can advance into Tempered Body 8th Layer.”

Excitement surfaced in Lin Dong's eyes. When he first heard that Lin Xiao and the rest had placed such high expectations of him for the Qingyang Town Hunt, it would be a lie to say that he did not feel any pressure. However, he knew that the Lei and Xie Family had the advantage in terms of resources. Furthermore, it was said there were several capable members among the current younger generation in their families. Therefore, Lin Dong knew that if he wanted to catch up to them, he must work extra hard.

As part of the Lin Family, he knew that he also had to think about the big picture. If he could achieve a good result at the upcoming

Qingyang Town Hunt, it would greatly bolster the reputation of the Lin Family and improve their standing. Enabling the Lin Family to become like the Raging Blade Dojo, able to stand toe to toe with the Lei and Xie Family in the future.

“I have already thoroughly mastered Penetrating Fist and Eight Desolations Palm. Tomorrow, I will visit the family’s Martial Arts Library and see if I can learn any powerful martial arts to boost my fighting potential.” Lin Dong muttered to himself. After all, his advantage lay in having a glowing shadow as a mentor, allowing him to bring the potential of any martial arts to its peak. Therefore, he could not forsake this advantage.

As he reached this decision, he kept his bottles carefully and fell into a deep sleep. Today’s intense battles had completely drained him.

The next day, just after Lin Dong finished his training regime, he immediately fled to the Lin Family Residences. On his way, many unfamiliar faces instantly greeted him as he passed by. Their overly friendly demeanor caused Lin Dong to feel uncomfortable and he casually dismissed them and carried on.

The Martial Arts Library was located in the Lin Family’s backyard and it was considered as an important place in the Lin Family. Without permission, one would not be able to enter.

At the entrance of the Martial Arts Library stood a few guards. However, they clearly recognized Lin Dong as they jovially welcomed and ushered him into the premises.

As he stepped into the Martial Arts Library, the scent of musty books immediately assaulted him. As Lin Dong scanned the surroundings, he realized that this facility was quite huge. Within the facility, were rows of red bookshelves filled with martial arts manuals.

This was the first time Lin Dong saw so many different martial arts manuals. Immediately, a fire lit up inside his heart, he knew that the Lin Family must have spent an exorbitant sum in order to build up such a vast collection.

As he leisurely strolled in the library, glittering manuals were reflected in his constantly darting his eyes.

Level 1 Martial Arts, Landslide Punch.

Level 1 Martial Arts, Whirlwind Kick.

Level 2 Martial Arts, Wandering Palm.

Lin Dong was dazzled as his eyes soaked up all the different varieties of martial art manuals available. However, most of these martial arts were Level 1 or Level 2. Thus far, he had yet to discover any Level 3 martial arts.

“All the Level 3 martial arts are located at the deepest part. You will not find them out here...” Just as Lin Dong furrowed his brows, a sweet voice suddenly echoed behind him. He hurriedly

turned his head, only to see Lin Xia leaning on a bookshelf with her arms folded across her chest, looking at him with a smile.

“Oh Lin Xia-jie. You are here as well.” Lin Dong returned a smile upon seeing Lin Xia.

“Lin Dong-biao-di, it seems like still water runs deep...” Lin Xia commented, a sweet smile on her pretty face as she approached Lin Dong.

Upon hearing these words, Lin Dong could only reply with a dry laugh.

“Come, let me take you to where our Level 3 martial art manuals are. However, Grandpa once said that if one had not reached Earthly Yuan level, it would be unwise to train in Level 3 martial arts or higher.” Lin Xia gently scoffed as she brushed past Lin Dong. Her slim and elegant figure appeared especially alluring.

Lin Dong put down the Level 2 martial art manual in his hand and followed her with a chuckle.

After following Lin Xia for a few minutes, they walked into a area with fewer bookshelves. Finally, Lin Xia stopped at a bookshelf hidden right at the end and said: “These are all the Level 3 martial art manuals that the Lin Family possess.”

Lin Dong curiously tilted his head forward only to see ten old manuals that had faded yellow with age on the bookshelf. Beside

each manual, was a wooden block explaining each martial art in detail.

“Level 3 martial art, Velvet Hand of Returning Air.”

“Level 3 martial art, Shadowless Claw...”

“.....”

Lin Dong’s eyes brightened as his eyes swept across these ten wooden blocks. Based on their names alone, he could sense that these martial arts were indeed more powerful.

“You can’t be thinking about learning Level 3 martial arts?” Lin Xia, who was standing right next to him, grumpily commented as she saw Lin Dong’s expression.

Lin Dong chuckled as he casually picked one of the martial art manuals. However, his vision suddenly turned towards the corner of the bookshelf as he realized that hidden there, was a dark-colored martial art manual.

“What is that?”

Lin Dong walked over with a puzzled look as he kept his eyes peeled on the wooden block beside it.

Level 3 martial arts, Wonder Gate Seal, incomplete.

Chapter 28: Wonder Gate Seal, Incomplete

“Wonder Gate Seal, incomplete...”

Lin Dong blankly stared at the description on the wooden block. He did not expect that the Grade 3 martial art manual was actually incomplete.

“This martial art manual was coincidentally found by Grandpa. However, as the description says, this martial art manual is incomplete. If you really want to learn a Grade 3 martial art, I suggest that you learn something else.” Lin Xiao uttered as she walked forward.

“If Grandpa is willing to display an incomplete manual, this must imply that the Wonder Gate Seal martial art must be very powerful indeed?” Lin Dong curiously asked.

“It’s alright. However, there is no point since you can’t fully master it. According to Grandpa, even if you master this incomplete martial art manual, it will only be as powerful as a Grade 3 martial arts. Or perhaps, even weaker.” Lin Xia replied with a smile.

“Furthermore, it is exceedingly difficult to master this incomplete Wonder Gate Seal. In fact, many people in the Lin Family have attempted, but thus far, only Grandpa and your Father have been successful. However, as it’s might lose out to other Level 3 martial arts, eventually they abandoned it.” Lin Xia warned him, noticing that Lin Dong was still tempted to try it out.

“Oh?”

Lin Dong was slightly taken back, to think that only his Father and Grandpa have managed to master this martial art. Seems like this Wonder Gate Seal martial art is indeed something special...

“If it is incomplete, I wonder if the mysterious glowing shadow can automatically restore the lost chapters?” Lin Dong wondered. Based on his experience with Penetrating Fist and Eight Desolations Palm, it seems that glowing shadow could perfect any martial arts. Could it also perfect this incomplete Wonder Gate Seal martial arts?

If the glowing shadow was really able to perfectly restore this Wonder Gate Seal martial art, Lin Dong would have undoubtedly uncovered a massive treasure. Even though he was unable to grasp how strong the Wonder Gate Seal was now, the fact was, even incomplete, it could qualify as a Grade 3 martial arts. This hinted that should the martial art manual be complete, it will at least be a Grade 4 martial arts!

Grade 4 martial arts. That no longer belongs to the lower category, but rather the middle category of martial arts!

In fact, in the entire Lin Family, there was only one Grade 4 martial art manual: The one secretly stolen by Grandpa when he was banished from the Lin Clan.

If Lin Dong could master a Grade 4 martial art, he had full faith

that he could even defeat a Tempered Body 9th Layer practitioner!

“I have to give it a try!”

Lin Dong's heart was now burning in excitement about the prospects of learning a Level 4 martial arts as he stared at the dark-colored manual with passionate eyes. Momentarily, he suppressed the excitement in his heart as reached out to take the manual. However, his arm was suddenly stopped mid-air.

“Oi, you cheeky fellow, why don't you listen to me? Are you aching for a beating!” Lin Xia, who was beside him, chided after she saw that Lin Dong was still determined to chose this incomplete martial art manual even after all of her advice.

“Ahhh, let me try learning this first. If it's not suitable, I will just exchange it for another one. “ Lin Dong replied with a chuckle.

“You... Argh, fine. Whatever.”

Lin Xia was evidently frustrated as she stamped her foot on the floor. Previously, she had seen many people attempt to learn this incomplete martial art as well. Many of them held the same mentality as Lin Dong and naively believed that they could master it. However, in the end, all of them ended up disappointed and eventually switched over to a new martial art. Therefore, she did not want to see Lin Dong waste his time on this fruitless endeavour.

“Rest assured Lin Xia-jie. I am merely curious. I have not made any concrete plans to start training yet.” Lin Dong replied with a smile, he knew that Lin Xia was merely looking out for him.

“Alright, you best take care of yourself. Don’t delay your training because of this. Those bastards from Lei and Xie Family have been eyeing us for a while, and so far, we have frequently clashed with their younger generation members.”

As she mentioned this fact, traces of anger flashed on Lin Xia’s cheeks. Immediately, her expression turned slightly dark as she sighed: “However, the matter of the fact remains that those bastards are indeed stronger than us. Every time we clash, we have came out on the losing end. Furthermore, as it is inappropriate for adults to intervene in these matters, they can only stand aside helplessly...”

“Who is currently the strongest amongst the younger generation in Lei and Xie Family?” Lin Dong asked as he gently nodded his head. He was not surprised by this fact, after all the two families were very well-established in Qingyang Town. In comparison, the Lin Family definitely felt like an outsider.

“Among the younger generation in the Lei Family, the strongest fellow should be Lei Li. Based on my knowledge, he has already advanced to Tempered Body 8th Layer four months ago. Right now, he may have perhaps even reached 9th Layer...”

“As for the Xie Family, it should be Xie Yingying. She should be at Tempered Body 8th Layer.” When Lin Xia mentioned this name, she gritted her teeth. Evidently, there was some bad blood between

them.

“Lei Li, Xie Yingying...”

Lin Dong silently recited their names as he lamented the fact that the Lei and Xie Family were indeed much more well-established than theirs.

“What about the Raging Blade Dojo?” Lin Dong suddenly recalled the faction that had advanced even more rapidly than the Lin Family, even though they had arrived later at Qingyang Town.

“For the Raging Blade Dojo, the strongest fellow should be Wu Yun. Right now, his strength seems to be approximately at Tempered Body 8th Layer. However, he is constantly squabbling with the other two from the Lei and Xie Families. In fact, he fought with Lei Li before, though he was defeated in the end.” Lin Xia replied.

“Indeed a fearsome bunch...” Lin Dong lightly smiled, involuntarily tightening his grip on the dark-colored martial art manual. There was no point for him to compete with Lin Hong and the rest anymore, instead, he should contend against these reputable figures from the younger generation of Qingyang Town.

“Yeah, in comparison, the younger generation in Lin Family is definitely weaker.”

Lin Xia sighed, however, her spirits promptly lifted as she stared

at Lin Dong and happily proclaimed: “However, things are going to change. With a dark horse like you around, our Lin Family will definitely excel in the upcoming “hunt”.”

“Lin Xia-jie, you speak too highly of me. After all, my current strength is similar to yours. Compared to these three fellows, I still have a long way to go.” Lin Dong shook his head, a smile on his face.

“Quit acting coy. You merely started training less than one year ago, don’t you know how much earlier I started training? At your current speed, you can easily overtake Lei Li and become the top younger generation member in the whole Qingyang Town.” Lin Xia retorted as she rolled her eyes.

“However, let me warn you first. Once you become stronger than Lei Li, you must help me take care of that b*tch Xie Yingying. Or else, I will never forgive you!” As if she recalled something, Lin Xia’s suddenly threatened Lin Dong.

Lin Dong was shocked as he witnessed the terrifying glint in Lin Xia’s eyes, it was as if he was looking at a small female tiger. Immediately, he nodded his head, and replied with a dry laugh: “Since Lin Xia-jie has requested this favor, I will definitely fulfill it. However, why must I bother with Lei Li to deal with Xie Yingying?”

“That is because Xie Yingying is that bastard’s fiance. If you are dealing with her, you must get past Lei Li too.” Lin Xia explained.

“Understood.”

Lin Dong was taken back, though soon after, he nodded his head.

“Alright, it’s getting late. Time to leave. After you register, you can bring this incomplete martial art manual home.” Lin Xia nodded in satisfaction before she turned and walked away. As she placed her jade-like hands behind her back, her pony tail extended towards her slender waist, swing back and forth in tandem with her gait, giving off the impression of a lively girl.

As he followed behind Lin Xia, Lin Dong quickly registered and then left the Martial Arts Library with the incomplete Wonder Gate Seal martial arts manual in hand.

After he left the Martial Arts Library, Lin Xia and Lin Dong chatted for a while before she finally left. Lin Dong heaved a sigh of relief as he swiftly proceeded back home. He was extremely eager to see if the mysterious glowing shadow could fully restore this incomplete Wonder Gate Seal martial art...

Chapter 29: A Change in the Stone Talisman

The faint moonlight shrouded the entire land like a layer of silver yarn.

Lin Dong's figure once again appeared in the darkness of the Spiritual Domain. Closely following which, two glowing shadows also winked into existence as they displayed Penetrating Fist and Eight Desolations Palm respectively.

However, this time, Lin Dong's did not bother to glance at either of these two glowing shadows. Instead, he firmly stared at the spot behind the second glowing shadow, as shades of anticipation and nervousness coloured his face.

In the afternoon, he had already read through the Wonder Gate Seal manual. Yet, just as Lin Xia had said, this was only an incomplete manual, and to master this extremely complicated and detailed martial art, was indeed excessively difficult.

Thus, a whole afternoon of intense studying yielded little results. Moreover, this Wonder Gate Seal incomplete manual was also different from the other martial arts Lin Dong had come into contact with before. For example, Penetrating Fist and Eight Desolations Palm were both martial arts that involved a fixed sequence or pattern of moves. In comparison, Wonder Gate Seal used some kind of hand-seals in order to draw out the Yuan Energy within the body, and when Yuan Energy is combined with the hand-seals, an exceedingly strong power will be generated.

Although he merely skimmed through the manual, Lin Dong was still able to sense that the Seal Method described in the incomplete manual was not complete. Maybe that was why Lin Xiao and Lin Zhentian had decided to give up on this martial art, even after successfully mastering the Hand-Seal method. After all, without the full manual, it was impossible to bring out the true might of Wonder Gate Seal.

As for the missing Hand-Seal Methods, Lin Dong hope that the Stone Talisman Glowing Shadow was able to complete it...

Under Lin Dong's strained gaze, at first, nothing happened in the darkness behind the second glowing shadow. Momentarily, the darkness heaved as a third glowing shadow was formed.

Upon witnessing the glowing shadow take shape, Lin Dong could not help but heave a sigh of relief in his heart.

When that glowing shadow finally winked into existence, its hands folded together to form into a complicated hand-seal.

"This is indeed the opening Hand-Seal Method of the Wonder Gate Seal."

A fire lit up in Lin Dong's eyes as he focused all his senses on the glowing shadow.

After the first hand-seal, the glowing shadow displayed five other hand-seals in succession. Each different Seal method displayed was

fairly complicated, yet with the preparations that he had done in the afternoon, though hard pressed, Lin Dong was able to keep up with its rhythm.

When the hand-seal made by the glowing shadow changed for 7th time, Lin Dong's heart started to beat rapidly as the Hand-Seal Methods written on the incomplete manual had been cut off here. Thus, the rest of the Hand-Seal Methods were not recorded in this incomplete manual...

Under Lin Dong's fiery and intense gaze, the originally smooth movements of the glowing shadow suddenly came to a standstill. After what seemed like an eternity, fortunately, the hand-seal finally continued to change!

“Success!”

Gazing at the hands of the glowing shadow, the new hand-seal was clearly very unfamiliar, yet it also looked extremely in place with the previous set of hand-seals. Lin Dong could barely restrain himself from jumping in joy, as excitement and happiness flooded his face.

The incomplete martial art manual was perfectly restored thanks to the fantastic ability of the Stone Talisman glowing shadow!

“To think that it actually works...”

Overcome by emotion, it took a while before Lin Dong finally

regained his composure and he once again focused on the Stone Talisman Glowing Shadow. However, his complexion suddenly changed as he found that the Glowing Shadow had seemed to fade off and looked much fainter than before. Even the speed at which the hand-seals changed had started to slow down.

“What’s going on?” Upon witnessing this scene, Lin Dong felt highly alarmed. This was the first time something like this had happened, ever since he obtained the Stone Talisman.

The expression on Lin Dong’s face turned slightly ugly, as the rate at which the Glowing Shadow moved from each hand-seal became gradually slower. In the end, the Glowing Shadow unexpectedly came to a halt. However, the last hand-seal in its hands was clearly not the last step in Wonder Gate Seal.

“Perhaps the Stone Talisman Glowing Shadow is unable to completely restore this Wonder Gate Seal?”

Lin Dong’s eyebrows tightly furrowed together, as he was evidently unable to comprehend why the Stone Talisman Glowing Shadow, which was fine moments ago, had suddenly become incapable of executing Wonder Gate Seal.

However, although the Stone Talisman Glowing Shadow had paused, after a while, it once again returned to the starting point of Wonder Gate Seal. Yet, even at its second repetition, Lin Dong was disappointed when he realized that the Glowing Shadow still stopped at the same place it had previously...

Even though it kept repeating itself over and over, there was still no further improvements to the Wonder Gate Seal...

Lin Dong blankly stared at the Stone Talisman Glowing Shadow. A long time later, he finally reached his wit's end, and gave up. As he sighed, he self-mockingly said: "Forget it, I'll just make do with what I have. At least it's still more complete than the incomplete version written in the manual."

After saying this, Lin Dong stretched out his hands, as he imitated the Stone Talisman Glowing Shadow and formed hand-seals...

This lasted for a long time before Lin Dong finally relaxed his hands and took in a deep breath. Though the hand-seal were complicated, under the perfect tutelage of the Stone Talisman Glowing Shadow, committing these hand-seals to mind was not a difficult task. However, though it was easy to remember these hand-seals, it would be a different story when he was forced to use them in a battle.

"According to the incomplete manual, this Wonder Gate Seal is split into four chapters. However, the incomplete manual only records the 1st chapter of hand-seals. If I'm not mistaken, the extra hand-seals displayed by the Stone Talisman Glowing Shadow belonged to the 2nd chapter. Yet why can't the Glowing Shadow restore the 3rd and 4th chapters as well... Could it be too complex for it to handle?"

Lin Dong's pupils flickered from side to side as he racked his brains for a solution. In the end, he could only shake his head as he

sighed: “If it’s two chapters then it’s two chapters. Anyways, with my current strength, it would be a pretty good accomplishment to master the 1st chapter of Wonder Gate Seal.”

Lin Dong consoled himself in his heart, before leaving exiting the Spiritual Domain with a tinge of regret.

...

On his bed, Lin Dong’s tightly shut eyes finally opened. His strong and healthy figure jumped off the bed before concentrating his energy into his abdomen, as his hands came together to form rough imitations of those complicated hand-seal.

As he moved from one hand-seal to the next, ripples of Yuan Power were suddenly transmitted from the Yuan Power seed within Lin Dong’s channels. However, its movements were extremely minute, and after flickering, it disappeared once again.

As the ripples faded, Lin Dong helplessly shook his head. Although he had memorised the hand-seal, in order to reach the stage where he could use Yuan Power and Hand-Seal Method in tandem, he still had a long way to go. After all, when all is said and done, the 1st chapter of Wonder Gate Seal was already considered as a Level 3 martial arts.

“The 1st chapter of Wonder Gate Seal is already equivalent to a Level 3 martial art, if the 2nd chapter is added, then even if Wonder Gate Seal could not be considered as a Level 4 martial art, it would definitely still tower over the other Level 3 martial arts.”

As Lin Dong's thoughts reached this point, the gloominess from before weakened considerably. He lightly released out a sigh, as his hand reached to retrieve the stone talisman from his body. However, he suddenly noticed something from the corner of his eye and his complexion greatly changed.

“What is going on...”

The stone talisman had turned slightly dark and the originally lukewarm jade-like feeling had almost dissipated completely. Even the strange mystical characters that covered it had also become barely discernable.

The current stone talisman, looked almost no different from a rock by the roadside!

It was as if the stone talisman had lost its power supply and turned back into a normal rock.

“Energy deficiency?!”

A thought flashed in his mind, causing the franticness in Lin Dong's heart to scatter. Only now did he vaguely understand why the Stone Talisman Glowing Shadow could only restore till half of the chapters before automatically stopping.

Perhaps this Stone Talisman required energy in order to perfect these martial arts. Since it had already expended its energy on

Penetrating Fist, Eight Desolations Palm, and now Wonder Gate Seal, its original energy source had been depleted!

“That should be the case...”

In his room, Lin Dong wiped off the cold sweat from his forehead. Since he now knew where the problem lay, he could devise a solution to solve it. After all, this Stone Talisman was too important to him. No matter what, he could not afford to let anything happen to it.

Chapter 30: A Minor Accomplishment

Lin Dong knew that there were two methods to acquire more energy: From elixirs or from Yuan Power.

The likelihood of the former was comparatively less. Based on the ability of the stone talisman to refine pills, it did not seem to be too interested in the energy contained in elixirs. Therefore, he had to rely on Yuan Power.

As this realization dawned on Lin Dong, he hesitated for a moment before he slowly closed his eyes. As he felt the Yuan Power Seed within his body, a weak glow suddenly emerged at the center of Lin Dong's palm. A weak trace of Yuan Power simmered below the skin on his palm. However, the Yuan Power was unable to break out from body. After all, based on his current ability, he had yet to reach that level of mastery over Yuan Power.

“Buzz.”

Nonetheless, just as Lin Dong frowned, while gripping onto the Stone Talisman, it suddenly jolted and he could suddenly feel streams of energy within him being violently sucked out by the Stone Talisman.

Due to that suction force, the small trace of Yuan Power simmering below the skin on Lin Dong's palm was instantly swallowed up by the Stone Talisman. However, the Stone Talisman was not satisfied, as Lin Dong felt the suction force extend into his body and continue to absorb more Yuan Power

from the Yuan Power Seed within him.

This sudden change caused Lin Dong's face to turn pale. This Yuan Power Seed was the fruits of his labour after more than half a year of training, if it was completely sucked dry by the Stone Talisman, all his hard work would have gone down the river...

Just as Lin Dong panicked, a sharp pain abruptly emerged from his palm. He hastily turned to look, only to see that the Stone Talisman had unexpectedly started to embed itself into his palm!

The rate at which the Stone Talisman was fusing with Lin Dong's palm quickly sped up. Just as he hurriedly tried to pluck it out, the Stone Talisman had already slipped into his palm. However, his palm was completely unharmed with not a single scratch on his skin.

As the Stone Talisman slipped into Lin Dong's palm, the suction force gradually became weaker, until it eventually disappeared.

“This...”

Lin Dong suppressed the panic in his heart as he turned to look at his palm, only to find a row of faint glowing symbols. These symbols looked like they were imprinted underneath the skin of his palm, and were hard to find unless one looked closely.

These symbols were not foreign to Lin Dong as they were exactly the same symbols on the Stone Talisman.

As he gazed at the mysterious symbols, Lin Dong stood at a loss for words. He could vividly feel that the Stone Talisman had entered his palm. Perhaps it was because of this physical connection, Lin Dong now felt an increased familiarity with the Stone Talisman.

As he attempted to interact with the Stone Talisman inside his palm, Lin Dong closed his eyes, and instantly, he was brought into the Spiritual Domain. In there, the brightness of the third glowing shadow seemed to have recovered slightly.

“As expected, the Stone Talisman needs Yuan Power in order to perfect martial arts...”

Upon witnessing this scene, Lin Dong nodded his head as he finally grasped one of the mysteries behind the Stone Talisman. He closed his eyes and retreated from the Spiritual Domain. Ever since the Stone Talisman entered his body, he could now enter the Spiritual Domain whenever he wanted.

“The Yuan Power in my body is too weak. Hence, the Stone Talisman is still unable to perfect Wonder Gate Seal. I guess this martial arts is indeed rather complex...” Lin Dong muttered to himself as he curled his fingers into a fist.

“Looks like I will have to first improve my strength as quickly as possible...”

Lin Dong softly sighed. He finally understood that the Stone

Talisman required a huge amount of Yuan Power in order to perfect higher-level martial arts. Previously, when it encountered a Level 1 martial art like Penetrating Fist, it could easily perfect it. However, now that it had encountered a higher-level martial arts, which was furthermore incomplete, it needed the support of vast quantities of Yuan Power.

Upon this thought, Lin Dong decided to temporarily suppress his desire to master Wonder Gate Seal. As he sat down on his bed, he took out a bottle of Stone Talisman Ling Liquid and dripped a few drops into his mouth. Soon after, his body began to absorb streams of pure medicinal power as his Yuan Power seed gradually grew...

.....

In the following month's time, Lin Dong decided to seclude himself. He was rarely seen walking about in the Lin Family as he focused all his time and effort on training.

Thanks to help from the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid, various Elixirs Pills and his tireless training regime, he managed to achieve significant progress.

Within a month's time, the Yuan Power Seed within Lin Dong's body had grown in size by a few times. In fact, the Yuan Power contained within far surpasses the amount he had during the Family Competition. Though he had yet to advance to Tempered Body 8th Layer, it was only be a matter of time.

As for the 1st chapter of Wonder Gate Seal, Lin Dong had been

ceaselessly practising it during this period. Hence, he had become more and more proficient and could now better use Yuan Power and Hand-Seal Methods in tandem. However, with regards to the 2nd chapter of Wonder Gate Seal, regardless of how hard he drilled, Lin Dong was still unable to activate any Yuan Power in conjunction with it. Perhaps, his strength was still too weak.

Nonetheless, his hard work over this month had indeed paid off.

...

In the dense forest, Lin Dong sat atop a stone block with his eyes tightly shut. Faint traces of sweat were visible on his body, indicating that he had just went through a period of vigorous training.

As Lin Dong sat with his eyes closed, traces of Yuan Power floating in the air were constantly flowing into his body in tandem with his breathing and nourishing every part of his body.

Of course, the trickling Yuan Power was unable to satisfy Lin Dong's demand. Therefore, he gently swallowed a Flaming Crimson Reishi Pill.

As the pill entered his body, a powerful medicinal power instantly exploded in his body. In that instance, Lin Dong could sense an invigorating feeling constantly coursing through his bones and tissues.

As the medicinal power coursed through his body, it was refined by his channels into traces of Yuan Power which then assimilated into his Yuan Power Seed.

“Buzz buzz.”

As more and more Yuan Power flowed into his Yuan Power Seed, the Yuan Power Seed which had never moved before suddenly trembled slightly. A faint mist that was previously surrounding the Yuan Power seed turned into a glowing halo as it spiralled around the Yuan Power Seed.

Just as the glowing mist turned into a halo, Lin Dong could clearly feel that the Yuan Power Seed within him had started to flow along his channels and move towards his lower abdomen. However, just as the Yuan Power Seed reached the end of his inner body’s channel, an invisible resistance appeared. It was like an invisible wall that immediately stopped the Yuan Power Seed in its tracks.

Faced with the obstruction of the invisible wall, the Yuan Power Seed tried to forcibly barge through. However, after a few tries, there seemed to be little effect and it could only grudgingly give up...

“Tempered Body 8th Layer...”

After the Yuan Power Seed was blocked off by that invisible force, Lin Dong slowly opened his eyes. As he exhaled deeply, a look of excitement flashed in his eyes.

His Yuan Power Seed had grown several times in magnitude since the Family Competition. Based on his current progress, he should be already at Tempered Body 8th Layer.

“That invisible barrier should be the Dan Tian Barrier. If I can break through this barrier, my Yuan Power Seed would be able to enter into my Dan Tian and lay its roots securely in there, forming a stable foundation for training...”

Lin Dong murmured to himself. When the Yuan Power Seed laid its roots into his Dan Tian, it is a major sign that one was about to advance to Tempered Body 9th Layer. However, based on his current situation, he still had to work hard for a period of time before he could reach that step.

Nonetheless, progressing from Tempered Body 7th Layer to 8th Layer in merely one month's time was already a remarkable achievement. Therefore, it would be overly ambitious to aim for 9th Layer now. After all, Rome wasn't built in a day...

As he leaped off the stone block, Lin Dong straightened his body. With a serious expression on his face, he formed a complicated hand seal.

In the instance the hand-seal took shape, a special aura emerged from his body and filled the air.

Lin Dong's hand-seals swiftly changed as he formed several complex hand seals in a short span of time. Following his changing

hand-seals, the Yuan Power Seed within his body constantly emitted streams of Yuan Power, which rapidly flooded towards Lin Dong's palm.

“Go!”

As the glow on Lin Dong's palm gradually became brighter, he suddenly let out a roar as he slammed his palm onto a solid rock boulder.

“Boom!”

Upon contact, the rock boulder instantly exploded, as rock shrapnels scattered in every direction.

Panting heavily, a flushed Lin Dong stared at the rock debris. A look of uncontrollable delight in his eyes. He was finally able to execute the first move of Wonder Gate Seal after he had advanced to Tempered Body 8th Layer...

This overwhelming might outshined even his Penetrating Fist 10th Echo. Level 3 Martial Arts are indeed in a league of their own!

Chapter 31: Monster

In the dense forest, Lin Dong put away his fists, feeling some weakness in his body. Based on his current strength, executing Wonder Gate Seal once took up a huge chunk of his Yuan Power reserves. Thankfully, the force generated was truly tremendous and definitely worth the cost.

“Yuan Power Seed now is unable to store too much Yuan Power. It would be much better if I could quickly advance to Tempered Body 9th Layer...”

Once he reached Tempered Body 9th Layer, he will finally be able to open his Dan Tian. The Dan Tian had a far larger reserve compared to the Yuan Power Seed. When he reaches that stage, he could then freely expend his Yuan Power.

“During this period of training, I have almost exhausted all of my Elixir Pills...”

As he thought about his training, Lin Dong’s eyebrows knitted together. In less than half a month, he had advanced to Tempered Body 8th Layer. However, this had come at a huge cost to him. He had expended a large amount of Stone Talisman Ling Liquid. Moreover, his Elixir Pills had almost been completely used up. Right now, he only had 2 Flaming Crimson Reishi Pills left...

Overall, this half a month’s training, had nearly depleted Lin Dong’s collection of resources.

“I must find a way to secure more elixirs...”

Lin Dong softly sighed as a serious expression surfaced on his face. Based on the current strength he displayed, he could get some resources from the Lin Family. However, he did not care much for Elixir Pills refined from lower grade elixir. Yet, he also knew that Grade 3 elixirs were costly items and even the Lin Family did not possess too many of them. In fact, he was already very fortunate to receive two stalks of Flaming Crimson Reishi as an encouragement gift previously.

“Lin Dong-ge.”

Just as he was racking his head over this problem, a sweet voice sounded out from the dense forest. He turned to see Qing Tan hop over like a butterfly with a joyous glow on her rosy cheeks.

“Qing Tan, what’s up?” Lin Dong casually asked with a smile as he glanced towards her while he lifted up a section of the shattered rock boulder.

“Ling Dong-ge, I now possess Yuan Power!”

“Thud!”

The piece of rock in his hands fell to the ground with a thud as Lin Dong turned and stared blankly at Qing Tan.

“Yuan Power? Have you reached Tempered Body 6th Layer? How

is that possible?!”

After overcoming his initial shock, Lin Dong regained his wits and a look of utter astonishment surfaced on his face. Even though Qing Tan had been harping about training for some time now, she had always slacked off. After all, Tempered Body training was indeed very tiring and unsuitable for some girls.

Based on his calculations, even if he secretly helped her, Qing Tan would need half a year before she could reach Tempered Body 6th Layer. However..., out of the blue, she came by to announce that she already possessed Yuan Power!

This was practically unheard of! It was even more ridiculous than the Stone Talisman.

As Lin Dong stood, overwhelmed with shock, Qing Tan extended her jade-like palm. On her hands, a light glow shimmered and its familiar pulse indicated that it was indeed Yuan Power...

“How could this be?” Lin Dong exclaimed as he sucked in a deep breath of air. He had never witnessed Qing Tan hard at work. How could she suddenly possess Yuan Power?

If his training speed was considered astonishing, then Qing Tan’s speed can only be described as ethereal.

“I don’t know either... When I woke up this morning, I felt like something was wrong with my body. And then, I discovered

this...” Qing Tan coyly said as she stuck out her tongue.

Lin Dong’s expression gradually turned serious as he grabbed onto Qing Tan’s delicate hands. Even though her hand felt soft and smooth on the surface, upon applying a little pressure, one could clearly feel that her bones possessed an exceptional tenacity. This result could only be accomplished after one has trained in Tempered Body for a long time.

As Lin Dong continued his careful examination, he suddenly discovered that beneath that toughness seemed to be a slight chill.

“It must be due to the Chilling Cold in her body!”

Suddenly, a light bulb lit up in Lin Dong’s head. Previously, he had discovered that even though the Chilling Cold within Qing Tan’s body was violent and savage, it was highly beneficial for a Tempered Body practitioner. Of course, this benefit could only extend to Qing Tan and Lin Dong, who had the Stone Talisman.

Over the past decade, this Chilling Cold would periodically flare up causing Qing Tan to be in massive pain every time. Qing Tan would be in massive pain. Perhaps, parts of her body gradually transformed due to constant attacks by this Chilling Cold.

Though only tiny part of the Chilling Cold entered and strengthened her body, they accumulated in her body bit by bit. Now, even though Qing Tan did not train hard, her body’s muscles and bones had already been strengthened multiple times until Yuan Power eventually appeared. With the right conditions

everything will easily fall into place.

Even though she did experience day after day of tough training, her body had naturally given rise to Yuan Power...

“Qing Tan’s body must have some difference from others.”

Lin Dong slowly suppressed the shock in his heart. He had never heard of anyone who possessed a Yuan Power Seed without physically tempering one’s body. If news of this got out, how devastated would those individuals desperately training to reach Tempered Body 6th Layer be?

Of course, this was not the whole truth. After all, ever since she was young, Qing Tan would be gruesomely tortured by the Chilling Cold every time it flared up. Therefore, in a way, she had actually payed a different kind of price to gain this naturally occurring Yuan Power Seed.

“Do not tell anyone else about this matter. Let’s talk to Father when he returns and ask for his opinion...” Lin Dong said after a moment of hesitation.

“Yes.” Qing Tan nodded her head obediently. She knew that this matter was very strange and if news got out, it might draw some trouble.

“Lin Dong-ge, it’s nearing the end of the month in a few days. The bazaar in Qingyang Town will be exceptionally crowded. How

about we go and take a look?” Qing Tan pleaded as she begged Lin Dong with puppy eyes.

“Bazaar?”

Lin Dong was stumped. This Bazaar was an event jointly organized by some of the more successful merchants in Qingyang Town and all sorts of items will be sold there. Hence, it was extremely popular place. In fact, it was arguably one of the most popular spots in Qingyang Town.

“Yeah. Lin Xia-jie and the rest have all went too...” Qing Tan continuously nodded her head. She was a young and lively girl and naturally these places piqued her interest. However, as she was still grounded by Lin Xiao, she did not dare to go on her own. Therefore, she tried to rope in Lin Dong.

As Lin Dong muttered to himself as an idea suddenly sprung up in his head. Right now, he desperately needed elixirs and naturally he did not have the funds required to purchase the exorbitant elixirs that he needed. However, he had the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid and his last two Flaming Crimson Reishi Pills...

These two items are definitely valuable. In particular, the Flaming Crimson Reishi Pills were especially prized. Furthermore, these items all contain exceedingly pure Ling Qi, compared to normal elixirs, they were much more potent. Therefore, it was almost assured that there will be many people clamouring to buy these items from him.

However, he could not sell too many of these items as that might arouse other's suspicion.

Moreover, Lin Dong was highly reluctant to part with any of his Stone Talisman Ling Liquid or Elixir Pills.

However, once he sold these items, it will be an easy matter buy the elixirs that he required...

As he stumbled upon this thought, Lin Dong could not help but smile as he felt a weight lifted off his chest. He had finally found a solution to this thorny problem.

“Alright, lets go visit the Bazaar.”

After he made up his mind, Lin Dong did not want to waste any more time and he quickly agreed with a chuckle.

When she saw that Lin Dong was willing to accompany her to the Bazaar, Qing Tan's eyes curled into a crescent moon. Her sweet expression was truly mesmerizing.

Chapter 32: The Underground Bazaar

The bazaar was located in the north plaza of Qingyang Town. Coincidentally, this was where numerous influential factions came into contact with each other. And because of the various conflicts between the groups, not one of them was able to take control of this area. Thus, the bazaar was established.

In the bazaar, there were various establishments set up by different factions in Qingyang Town. Due to this profitable arrangement, most of the factions tolerated the existence of the bazaar and eventually a strange, delicate balance was struck.

Even outside of town, the Qingyang Town bazaar was very well known. Therefore, besides the local crowd, it also attracted some bandits from the neighbouring villages. However, this helped to increase the diversity of the crowd and hence even the local tyrants, the Lie and Xie Family, did not dare to seize this area for themselves in fear of destroying their cash cow.

...

When Lin Dong and Qing Tan arrived at the bazaar's entrance, they could not help but gasp as they saw the flood of people and the ruckus inside the bazaar. This bazaar was definitely the largest market around Qingyang Town and its crowds were indeed intimidating.

“Lets go.”

Lin Dong looked at the bazaar with an inquisitive gaze. These days, he rarely ventured into these kind of places. Nonetheless, as a young man, he was still curious about them.

After he spoke, he grabbed Qing Tan's tiny hand and burrowed into the bazaar.

In the bazaar, the variety of items displayed was dazzling. Even though the streets were relatively wide, due to the overwhelming amount of people present, they still felt somewhat congested.

Qing Tan and Lin Dong were dripping with sweat after merely walking through a small alley. However, Qing Tan was extremely excited and her tiny face flushed in excitement. Together with her adorable laughter, she looked extremely cute and inadvertently drew much attention from the crowd. As they turned to look, many of them were left breathless as they saw her picture perfect looks and snowy white skin.

At last, the two of them stopped at a lavish building located at the tip of a street. This part of the bazaar was considered as a rather posh district. The Lei Family, Xie Family and the Raging Blade Dojo all had shops here.

"Qing Tan, wait for me here. I will be right back..." Lin Dong reminded Qing Tan as he scanned the surroundings. Then, he slipped into the crowd and disappeared from view.

As he traversed through the crowd, Lin Dong casually bought a bamboo hat from a little shop, giving him a peace of mind before

he returned to one of the main streets. Finally, he stopped before a giant black door.

There were all sorts of people in the bazaar. Naturally, some of the items sold here could attract unwanted attention due to a variety of reasons. Therefore, an underground bazaar was born.

The place that Lin Dong had arrived at was one of those underground bazaars. In this place, one can easily sell their goods at a fairly reasonable rate, no questions asked.

Outside of the giant black door, there was a constant stream of visitors. However, just like Lin Dong, all these visitors wore a black bamboo hat to conceal their identities.

As he lightly spit out a sigh, Lin Dong suppressed the anxiety in his heart and calmly walked through the door. As he stepped through the door, he could sense an ominous aura that caused a chill to be felt on one's skin.

Behind that door laid a long alleyway. Following the path, Lin Dong discovered several tightly shut doors along the way. He knew that this was where the transactions took place and he quickly looked for a half-opened door before walking in.

As he entered the room, he saw that it was rather dimly lit and a large table stood in the middle. The center of the table was blocked by a black metal grille and just inches below it was a small opening.

“Please take a seat. If you have any items to exchange, please put them in the slot.” A seemingly aged voice sounded out from behind the black metal grille.

By now, the fear in Lin Dong’s heart had subsided. As he sat down, he took out a transparent bottle from his sleeve. Contained within the bottle were ten drops of Stone Talisman Ling Liquid. However, these drops were not pure as they had been diluted by Lin Dong.

“A medicinal liquid refined from an elixir. It is very good for Tempered Body practitioners and it can be used for treatment purposes as well.” Lin Dong deliberately croaked in a strange voice. Even though it sounded terrible, it helped to mask his real voice.

A wrinkled palm reached out and took the glass bottle. Soon after, Lin Dong heard a dripping sound as the man inside was trying to examine the properties of the Ling Liquid.

This examination took nearly ten minutes before the voice once again sounded out from behind that window: “This medicinal liquid has approximately the same amount of Ling Qi as a Grade 2 elixir. It is also gentle in nature and thus very suitable for Tempered Body practitioners. Since it also has medicinal properties, I am willing to pay you a higher price. What do you want in exchange?”

Lin Dong’s finger trembled as he marvelled at the shop keeper’s ability. After slightly hesitating, he answered: “Seven stalks of Grade 3 elixirs”.

“That’s too much. Your medicinal liquid is too luxurious for Tempered Body practitioners to use. On the other hand, though it has some medicinal properties, it is also too wasteful to use it for treatment. Therefore, it is not easy to sell.” After a moment of silence, the man behind the window replied. He was evidently bothered that Lin Dong had asked for such an exorbitant sum.

“How about three stalks of Grade 3 elixirs.”

“Six stalks.” Lin Dong firmly replied.

“Five stalks. That’s the best I can do...” It was as if the man behind the window shook his head as he resolutely replied. This was evidently the highest he could offer.

“Deal.”

Lin Dong shrugged his shoulders as under the bamboo hat, a smile emerged on his face. Ten drops of Ling Liquid that had been diluted once could actually be exchanged for five stalks of Grade 3 Elixirs. This was a pretty good harvest for him. It did not matter if the shopkeeper had intentionally short changed him, after all he personally did not care much for the diluted Ling Liquid.

The shopkeeper was extremely efficient. Within five minutes, an intricate box was pushed out from below the window. As Lin Dong opened the box, he saw five thumb sized dark yellow fruits quietly resting within. He could faintly smell a fragrant aroma drifting up from them.

“Grade 3 elixir, Yellow Mud Fruit.”

Lin Dong obviously recognized these dark yellow fruits. After a carefully inspecting the goods, he nodded his head in contentment as he kept the wooden box. Then, he swiftly left the room.

After Lin Dong exited the room, the metal barrier was slowly raised. Behind, stood an elderly man dressed in grey robes. As he held onto the bottle, he smelt the aroma from within before gently nodding his head.

“Old Shopkeeper, is this thing really worth 5 Yellow Mud Fruits?” Standing behind the old man, a middle-aged man with a blood thirsty stench growled.

“This medicinal liquid is extremely beneficial for any Tempered Body Practitioner. I believe that either the Lei or Xie Family, or Raging Blade Dojo will be glad to purchase it for an exorbitant sum.” The old man replied with a faint smile.

“Oh? Should I run a background check on that fellow then?” The middle-aged man was momentarily shocked, however just as his words left his mouth, the expression on the old man darkened. Upon witnessing this scene, the middle-aged man immediately shut his mouth.

“Don’t you know our rules? If you wreck our reputation, how would we continue on in Qingyang Town?”

The middle-aged man hastily nodded after hearing the old man reprimand him.

“Snort.”

The old man snorted as he stood up and left with the bottle.

...

After Lin Dong came out of the underground bazaar, he strolled about randomly in the huge bazaar for a while before speedily throwing away the bamboo hat and heading towards a certain street.

At the place where they had initially parted, Lin Dong easily found Qing Tan who was still obediently waiting for him there. Just as he prepared to bring her to once again roam about, the latter suddenly pulled at his arm.

Lin Dong shifted his gaze only to see a familiar figure walking out from the entrance of the building. Unexpectedly, it was Lin Shan.

As Lin Dong saw Lin Shan, the latter also discovered the two of them. Initially, a pleasantly surprised look burst forth before his expression abruptly changed as if he had suddenly recalled something as he stood rooted on the spot.

Lin Dong shot a glance at the bruises on Lin Shan's face. The latter looked like he had been cruelly beaten...

Glued on the spot, Lin Shan looked at Lin Dong. It was as if the former desired to walk over and yet was afraid to because of their history. In the end, Lin Shan was at a loss of what to do.

“Hai.”

Lin Dong sighed as he pulled Qing Tan over and asked: “What happened?”

Lin Shan somewhat fearfully glanced at Lin Dong. After some hesitation, the former finally said: “We ran into those bastards from the Xie Family, after that, Lin Xia-jie was bullied and then we fought with them...but...there were too many of them. I escaped...to find...help.”

Lin Shan's face flushed red as he involuntarily dipped his head downwards.

“Lin Xia-jie is there too?”

Stunned, Lin Dong quickly recovered as his eyebrows tightly knitted together. He muttered to himself for a bit before commanding Lin Shan as he gestured with his hand: “Bring me there.”

After all, he had a fairly good relationship with Lin Xia. As for

Lin Hong and Lin Shan, all of their past clashes were confined to within the family. He was not so narrow minded as to look on without lifting a finger when such a thing happened.

At Lin Dong's words, Lin Shan immediately lifted his head and looked at Lin Dong with astonishment. He clearly never imagined that Lin Dong would disregard their past enmity and extend a helping hand. With somewhat red eyes, Lin Shan forcefully nodded.

Chapter 33: Xie Ting

“We were originally here to have some fun. However we encountered those bastards from the Xie Family. Lin Xia-jie wanted to buy a little trinket but those bastards intentionally caused a ruckus. In the end, Lin Xia was so angry that she could no longer bear it and started a fight...”

“However, the ring leader of that Xia Family bunch was the wretched Xie Ting. She is Xie Yingying’s younger sister and currently has the strength of Tempered Layer 7th Layer. Plus they had more people...in the chaos, that woman took the opportunity to give Lin Xia-jie a slap.”

The three swiftly ran towards the wide building. Lin Shan had explained everything that had happened in detail, as he was explaining, his fists clenched tightly, the extreme anger in his heart very evident for all to see.

Lin Dong slightly frowned, these members of the younger generation from the Xie Family were really a little too unbridled. After all, Lin Xia-jie was a girl, hitting her face was crossing the line.

“People from the Xie Family are indeed very loathsome.” To one side, Qing Tan fumed. No matter what, as a member of the Lin Family, they must now show a united front.

“Let us make a little more haste.” Lin Dong nodded in agreement as he once again accelerated.

...

Deep in the building was a wide area littered with bits of rubble. Surrounding it were some rather popular stores. All kinds of elixirs, weapons, armors and even martial arts manuals and crystals were on display.

This place counted as one of the more high-end districts in the bazaar. Those who came here were mostly people of a certain level of status in Qingyang Town. And at this moment, there were many people crowding around a spot on the fringe of the open space, gazing at the two groups within.

The members from both parties were quite young, yet the atmosphere that they exuded appeared especially intense.

The Xie and Lin Families were both considered as major factions in Qingyang Town. However, most people also knew that Lei and Xie Family were constantly trying to undermine the Lin Family. Therefore, there were hardly surprised to see their younger generation clash.

“Lin Xia, hand over the fox crystal necklace, or else, I will not let you off.” Standing at the head of the Xie Family’s younger generation, an elegantly dressed young lady proudly stood as she remarked with a hint of ridicule on her fair oval face. Together with her thin lips, she gave off a harsh aura.

“Give it to you?” Lin Xia snorted as she faced the young lady

opposite her. On her cheek, was a faint red hand-print, which had been left by that b*tch when she had been struggling with the others.

Lin Xia immediately ripped the snow white necklace apart. She understood that this was merely an accessory and based on Xie Ting's status, she could hardly care for such an item. Rather, she was just intentionally stirring up trouble.

Just as Lin Xia expected, after witnessing her rip the necklace apart, Xie Ting's eyebrows lifted as she snickered: "You are really a stubborn one. Looks like I will have to deal with you today."

"Xie Ting, don't be too overbearing." Lin Hong, who was standing behind Lin Xia, hollered. He looked rather ragged, as if he had just been through a fight.

"What can you guys do? If it was not for the magnanimity of our Xie Family, do you think the Lin Family can survive in Qingyang Town?" Upon hearing these words, the corners of Xie Ting's mouth curled up as she ridiculed them.

"Hehe, let us teach them a lesson. In the future, they will know who is the master." Standing beside Xie Ting, a young man dressed in yellow clothes chuckled in a strange manner.

"Yes." Just as the yellow-clothed youngster finished his sentence, another youngster standing beside immediately nodded his head with a smile. It seems like the two of them had some pull among the younger generation in the Xie Family.

Lin Hong's expression darkened upon hearing their conversation. He knew that on his side, only him and Lin Xia were at Tempered Body 7th Layer, while on the other side, they had three people at Tempered Body 7th Layer. If they really clashed together, they would definitely lose out.

“Good, let's teach them a lesson and put them in their place, a foreigner family can never compare to the local one” Like a little demon, Xie Ting smiled as she stared viciously at Lin Xia.

Seeing that Xie Ting was in agreement, the younger generation members of the Xie Family started to get excited as they stared maliciously at Lin Xia and company.

“Attack!”

Immediately, a light glow exploded on the bodies of Xie Ting and the two other youngsters. The three of them immediately dashed towards Lin Xia and Lin Hong as the rest of the Xie Family's younger generation members also rushed forward and intercepted the rest of the Lin Family's members.

Lin Hong and Lin Xia's expression became pained as they saw the three of them dashing towards them. Two against three, they knew that they were bound to suffer.

“Swoosh!”

However, right before the trio reached Lin Xia and Lin Hong, a sound suddenly echoed from the side. The three of them hurriedly dodged as three pieces of rock were heavily slammed into a nearby post, releasing deep thuds.

“Who is that?!”

The trio furrowed their eyebrows as they witnessed this unexpected development. As they turned to look, they saw three figures hurriedly rushing over. Leading the pack, was Lin Shan, who had previously ran away after a harsh beating.

“Lin Dong!”

Lin Xia and Lin Hong gasped in unison as they saw the figure behind Lin Shan. Instantly, delight filled their eyes.

“Are you alright?” Lin Dong asked as he led the other two towards the crowd. As he glanced at Lin Xia, his eyebrows tightly knitted together after he saw the red hand-print on the latter’s cheek.

“Lin Dong? You are that fellow that suddenly emerged from the Lin Family?” Xie Ting said as her eyes darted across Lin Dong’s body, the corner of her mouth pulling downwards.

“Why are you here?” After a moment of delight, Lin Xia was a little worried again. Even if Lin Dong arrived, it would only lead to a stalemate now.

“We came here to enjoy ourselves and happened to run into Lin Shan.” Lin Dong replied with a smile. Up till now, he had yet to look at that haughty Xie Ting, much less reply to any of her questions.

Lin Dong’s actions inadvertently enraged Xie Ting. She was not used to being treated as air. Just as rage clouded her mind, suddenly a person beside her muttered something to her ears.

“Chey, I thought he was somebody. Turns out he is the son of the disabled Lin Xiao.”

Xie Ting sneered. Lin Dong’s body clearly froze before he turned firstly to look at Xie Ting’s face and then letting out a laugh. He lifted his foot and walked towards Xie Ting.

“Be careful.” Seeing his actions, Lin Xia hastily warned. The opponent was after all three Tempered Body 7th Layer practitioners.

“Heh heh, let me test how good this so called Lin Family genius really is.” Eyeing Lin Dong as he walked over, the yellow clothed youngster could not help but sneer before quickly stepping forward as a weak glow rapidly condensed at the center of his palm.

“Thump!”

As the youngster in yellow charged at Lin Dong, a low sound thud immediately followed as a figure flew backwards under the astonished gazes of the crowd before finally landing heavily onto the ground.

As they gazed at the sorry figure of the youngster in yellow, many of them were startled. Even the surrounding onlookers also cast astonished gazes at Lin Dong who had so easily defeated a Tempered Body 7th Layer practitioner. Looks like this newly risen genius from the Lin Family did have some skills.

“Xie Zhen!”

Xie Ting and the rest of the Xie Family younger generation members expressions rapidly changed after seeing Lin Dong sweeping away the yellow clothed youngster with a single swipe of his palm.

“You dare to attack a member of our Xie Family, you’re just courting death!” The other Tempered Body 7th Layer youngster rushed forward, slightly unable to believe what had happened as a hot anger burned in his eyes. Likewise, his figure was straight away blown away by Lin Dong with a thrust of his palm.

“Hsss...”

This time, quite a few people gasped. The first time might have been luck but the second time was definitely not a fortunate coincidence...

“Tempered Body 8th Layer...”

Lin Xia, Lin Hong and the rest foolishly stared at Lin Dong’s back. So easily beating a Tempered Body 7th Layer opponent can only mean that Lin Dong’s strength had stepped into the 8th Layer!

“You...what do you plan on doing? My sister and her gang are also here. If you don’t want to get beaten, then bring your people and get out of here!”

Gazing at how effortlessly Lin Dong had dispatched the two and then started closing the distance between them, Xie Ting’s face finally turned pale. Yet she still raised her head and coldly looked at Lin Dong. She did not believe that Lin Dong would dare to hit her!

Faced with the pale oval-shaped face before him, Lin Dong laughed as an icy light shined in his eyes. He lifted his palm.

“Stop!”

In the instant that Lin Dong raised his hand, a sharp and clear voice urgently sounded out. Next, a strong wind shot straight at Lin Dong.

“Pa!”

Right before the shout could fade away, Lin Dong’s expression slightly darkened. Under everyone’s gazes of disbelief, his palm

swiftly jerked before finally slapping fiercely on Xie Ting's face. This loud and clear slap caused the entire area to lapse into silence.

Chapter 34: Lei Li

One by one, astonished gazes looked to Xie Ting, whose cheek had turned red after receiving Lin Dong's slap. The once noisy space had become absolutely silent.

The silence only lasted for a moment before some people regained their wits and stared strangely at Lin Dong, evidently flabbergasted at his decision. No matter what insults spewed out of her mouth, Xie Ting was considered a beauty. Yet this did not cause even the slightest hesitation on Lin Dong's part.

“Fierce and decisive.” Some people in the crowd secretly evaluated Lin Dong in their hearts. The methods of this genius, who had recently emerged from the Lin Family, seemed somewhat different.

Lin Xie and the rest were also stunned by Lin Dong's actions. As they gazed at the dazed Xie Ting, who had her hand on her cheek, a thrill emerged in their hearts. This b*tch had always despised their Lin Family and the sight of her being slapped by Lin Dong was extremely satisfying.

Just as the slap landed on Xie Ting's face, Lin Dong suddenly stretched out his other palm and firmly caught an explosive blow that was heading his way. To his surprise, it turned out to be a broken rock. However the force behind the rock was unable to make Lin Dong's arm budge at all.

“You hit me... You actually dared to hit me!”

Just as Lin Dong grabbed onto the broken rock, Xie Ting finally regained her senses. The burning sensation on her cheek caused her body to tremble. She lifted her head and glared at Lin Dong with a hideous expression, her face losing all traces of its previously haughty look.

“There will always be a price to pay for speaking without thinking first.” Lin Dong glanced at her and replied in an indifferent manner.

“Who do you think you are, to dare to hit me?” Lin Dong’s casual expression drove Xie Ting nearly insane. Since young, who had dared to lay a hand on her?

Her beautiful face twitched slightly. In the next second, she raised her palm and viciously swung it towards Lin Dong’s face.

“Pa!”

Lin Dong extended his palm and easily stopped Xie Ting’s palm. Just as he was about to push her off, suddenly a cold shout echoed from a distance away.

“I think, that should be enough?”

The Yuan Power gathering at Lin Dong’s palm gradually withdrew as he tilted his head to see a young lady dressed in a fox fur coat approaching them from a distance away. The young lady

gave off an elegant aura and her looks bore some similarity to Xie Ting. However, she did not exhibit an unreasonable or mean aura like Xie Ting. In fact, this lady looked very approachable, and this fact caused Lin Dong to frown.

“Sister!”

Upon seeing the young lady, Xie Ting’s eyes reddened as she called out.

“Xie Family, Xie Yingying.” At this point, Lin Dong also figured out her identity. This was the most outstanding member of the Xie Family’s younger generation, Xie Yingying.

“You must be Lin Dong? Your actions from before were no good. Sometimes, acting rashly may cause your entire Family to suffer.” Xie Yingying stared at Lin Dong with her autumn water eyes as she uttered casually with a hint of coldness in her voice.

“Where were you at when they were bullying people from our Lin Family?” Lin Dong replied with a sneer as he released Xie Ting while meeting the stare of the slim young lady ahead of him.

Xie Yingying lifted her eyebrows. Just as she was about to reply, Lin Dong followed up: “Spare me your bullshit. At the end of the day, whoever is stronger reigns. Since a long time ago, your Xie Family has been targeting our Lin Family. If you guys had the ability, you would have chased us out of Qingyang Town. The reason why we still survive is because you guys did not have the power and even if you could, you knew that the price to pay would

be too high!”

“She hit a member of my Lin Family. Its only right that I hit her back. If you wish to stir up more trouble, go ahead, but spare me your ridiculous bullshit.”

Upon hearing these words, many people in the surrounding crowd nodded. Lin Dong’s words were harsh, yet they also made sense. All these years, the Lin Family had expanded rapidly, and even though they had not directly crossed swords with the Xie or Lei Family, most people knew that the Lin Family would not lose out on any front to the Xie or Lei Family.

However, if the two Families allied themselves, they would surely overpower the Lin Family. Nonetheless, the Raging Blade Dojo would not allow that to happen. After all, once the Lin Family was eliminated, they knew that the next target would likely be them.

Therefore, all these years, a delicate balance had checked these four major factions. Hence, it was childish to discuss which faction would eliminate which.

Xie Yingying was at a loss for words at Lin Dong’s retort. Her face instantly turned slightly ugly.

“Yes, well said. Indeed, whoever is stronger will reign.”

Just as Xie Yingying was left speechless, a chuckle suddenly

sounded out and a figure jumped down from the second floor. Straightening his back, an overwhelming pressure was felt by every younger generation member present.

“Lei Li!”

As they stared at the well-built young man, the expression on Lin Xia and the rest changed and they quickly crowded behind Lin Dong, a look of worry in their eyes.

“Big Brother Lei Li!” The members of the Xie Family shouted out in delight. In particular, Xie Ting was even more ecstatic.

“Lei Li, he should be Xie Yingying’s fiancé and the so-called number one younger generation member in Qingyang Town?”

Lin Dong’s eyebrows furrowed as he stared at the young man. The latter was approximately seventeen to eighteen years old and his body was very tall and well-built. Furthermore, since he was quite good looking and wore a bright and confident smile, he possessed a glamor that was lacking in the rest of the younger generation members.

“Yingying, let me handle them.” Lei Li smiled as he tenderly looked at Xie Yingying.

“Yes.” At the sight of Lei Li, Xie Yingying also let out a small smile. Soon after, she turned back to look at Lin Dong as a smug expression surfaced on her lips.

“You must be Lin Dong? Haha. I must admit, I agree with what you said before. However, let's make one issue clear. If it were not for the interventions by Raging Blade Dojo, the Lin Family would have already been chased out of Qingyang Town like dogs running away with tails beneath their legs.” Lei Li chuckled as he observed Lin Dong.

“If the Lei and Xie Family were not allies, you would not dare to utter such words... after all... that's only an if...” Lin Dong casually replied with a smile.

“Very well, you have a way with words...”

Lei Li's eyes narrowed as he shrugged his shoulder before cracking his knuckles. He looked right at Lin Dong and he smiled: “I must admit once more that I fully agree with something else you said previously. At the end of the day, the stronger one reign. Right now... perhaps my power is stronger than yours and I wish to repay the slap that you gave Ting-er.”

Upon hearing Lei Li's words, the expression on Lin Xia and the rest instantly changed. It was reputed that Lei Li had long advanced to Tempered Body 9th Layer. Even though Lin Dong was at Tempered Body 8th Layer, he was unable to contend against Lei Li.

“Thump!”

Lei Li obviously did not plan to allow Lin Dong any time to reject.

Thus, just as he finished his words, he immediately dashed forward and appeared in front of Lin Dong. On his fist, a thick glow swiftly emerged and the force behind that blow caused Lin Xia and the rest to turn pale.

“Back off!”

As he saw Lei Li’s lightning quick attack, Lin Dong’s expression focused as his back knocked heavily against Lin Xia and the rest, pushing them aside. Soon after, a series of crisp echoes reverberated in the plaza.

“Pa Pa Pa Pa...”

“Penetrating Fist Ninth Echo?” Upon hearing this familiar noise, many people in the crowd were shocked as they stared at Lin Dong with awe in their eyes. They did not expect that this latter could actually master Penetrating Fist at such a tender age. However, just based on that alone, it was still insufficient to endure Lei Li’s attack.

“Pa!”

Almost as if he knew what the crowd was thinking, after the ninth echo sounded, a soft miniscule echo sounded out from within Lin Dong’s body. However, this echo was audible only to Lin Dong.

“Bang!”

Under the watchful gaze of the crowd, both of them clashed together with their mighty blows causing a giant invisible shockwave to scatter from the epicenter.

Chapter 35: Preliminary Exchange

“Thump!”

A low muffled sound was heard as both fists collided. The resulting impact caused all the dust on the surrounding ground to be completely blown away.

The outcome that the crowd had expected did not materialize. Rather, Lin Dong's body stood firmly planted on the ground like a giant boulder after he received Lei Li's Tempered Body 9th Layer blow.

“Deng Deng!” (Sound of stepping)

Both of them took a few steps back after the collision. Lei Li fell back by two steps, while Lin Dong fell by three steps. Overall, Lei Li's attack did not have the expected impact that the crowd had imagined.

“He actually managed to take that blow...”

As they stared at Lin Dong, who ended up evenly matching with Lei Li, a look of shock surfaced on every younger generation member. After all, Lei Li had a legendary reputation in the Qingyang Town and many people had speculated that within half a year's time, he would breakthrough Tempered Body 9th Layer and advance to Earthly Yuan level. At that time, the strength of the Lei Family will soar again.

Among the younger generation in Qingyang Town, Lei Li was universally recognized as number one. However, today, this so called number one was actually stopped by a younger member from the Lin Family. This surprising development caused many people's eyes to pop out of their sockets.

Xie Yingying and Xie Ting's facial expressions changed as a look of anxiety surfaced in the former's eyes. It looks like this newcomer Lin Dong was truly capable.

In a blink of an eye, Xie Yingying calmed down. Even though Lin Dong had unexpectedly endured Lei Li's attack, it did not mean that he had the qualifications to go toe to toe with Lei Li yet.

After all, Lei Li was at Tempered Body 9th layer. Hence, compared to Lin Dong, who was only at Tempered Body 8th Layer, he was still much stronger. Furthermore, in their previous exchange, Lin Dong had used martial arts while Lei Li did not!

Therefore, if they were to continue and fighting seriously, Lin Dong's loss was a forgone conclusion.

“Penetrating Fist Ninth Echo? Not bad...”

As Lei Li stepped back, he looked at Lin Dong with a somewhat astonished look. Soon after, he smiled as he shook his head: “No wonder you could act so haughty. Turns out you do have some ability. However, you might not be so lucky the next time...”

After he spoke, on Lei Li's claw-like hands, a thick glow surfaced as the Yuan Power undulated. It seems like he was finally going to use martial arts to confront his opponent.

Upon witnessing this sight, the joy that Lin Xia and the rest felt instantly turned into dread. Based on his expression, it seems like Lei Li had finally turned serious.

Lin Dong's expression was calm. He knew that there was a vast gulf between Tempered Body 8th Layer and 9th Layer. Even if he had utilized the tenth echo of Penetrating Fist, he could barely match up to Lei Li. Furthermore, the latter had obviously trained in martial arts, and thanks to the Lei Family's solid background, he was probably quite well-versed in it. Therefore, if they fought seriously, Lei Li would probably have a better shot at victory.

Nonetheless, Lin Dong was confident that even if Lei Li won, it would be a pyrrhic victory!

“Huu...”

Lin Dong deeply exhaled as he stretched all ten of his fingers. He was anxious to find out just how powerful his Wonder Gate Seal technique would be together with his full strength. Even though it was only the first chapter of Wonder Gate Seal, which had been abandoned by Lin Xiao and Lin Zhen Tian, Lin Dong knew that the might of this martial art had become stronger after it was perfected by the Stone Talisman Glowing Shadow.

More onlookers gathered around as they witnessed the rising tension in the surrounding atmosphere. They were very interested to discover, whether the upcoming talent that had emerged from the Lin Family could match up to the legendary young genius Lei Li...

With his palms bent back, Lei Li's glare towards Lin Dong turned increasingly vicious. The Lei Family was considered as the most well-established faction in the Qingyang Town and they often despised other factions like the Lin Family that suddenly invaded and came into power. Therefore, he knew that if he did not utterly defeat Lin Dong, he would become a laughing stock.

“Hehe, this place is really crowded...”

Just as the Yuan Power in Lei Li's body started to swirl, a contemptuous laughter sounded out. Moments later ten figures leaped off a nearby building and directly walked towards the crowd.

These ten figures were all youngsters aged around sixteen or seventeen. They all wore the same clothes and a picture of a wildly dancing large sabre was sewn on their chest area.

“Raging Blade Dojo.”

Lin Dong was slightly stunned when he saw these people. He recognized them based on the picture on their shirts. They were from the Raging Blade Dojo, the third major faction that stood on the same level as the Xie and Lei Family.

Leading the pack of suave youngsters was a lean young man. That young man had extraordinarily large palms and was riddled with scars that were evidently caused by frequent practise with blades. He first glared at Lei Li before he raised his thumb and smiled at Lin Dong: “You must be Lin Dong from Lin Family? Your courage and insight are indeed pretty good.”

“Wu Yu, this is between me and him. Don’t meddle in other people’s business!!” Lei Li shouted at the smiling young man with a dark expression on his face.

“If I don’t step in, won’t you guys act like the whole Qingyang Town belongs to you?” Wu Yun rolled his eyes as he derisively answered. Looking at him, it was evident that he had some bad blood with Lei Li and the rest.

“Heh heh, Lei Li. Since you are itching for a battle, how about I join in?” As he smiled, Wu Yun replied as he stared somewhat passionately at Lei Li and licked his lips.

Upon hearing these words, Lei Li’s expression darkened further. He knew that he could defeat Wu Yun. However, the people from Raging Blade Dojo were rogues and they loved fighting. Once they start fighting, they will fight until the very end like a lunatic. Therefore, under normal circumstances, Lei Li wished to avoid a fight with the latter.

“Wu Yun, Big Brother Lei Li does not wish to fight with you. Going around to stir up trouble, is that the style of your Raging

Blade Dojo?” Xie Yingying asked in an indifferent manner.

“I do not know if that is the style of Raging Blade Dojo, but it definitely is my style. If you have any objections, you can discuss it with me, though I might not accept.” Facing the sarcasm in Xie Yingying’s words, Wu Yun seriously answered instead as he nodded his head.

Xie Yingying bit her red lips as her facial expression turned slightly black. Nothing seemed to be going her way today. First, she encountered a harsh straightforward talker, Lin Dong, and now she had met a hoodlum. Hence, rage filled her entire body.

At Wu Yun’s reply, Lin Dong involuntarily let out a smile. He seemed to have taken a liking to this smart-ass fellow.

Lei Li’s face twitched as his expression darkened.

“Alright, all you little fellows have caused enough trouble already. Its time to head home, this is a place for conducting business.”

Just as the atmosphere was totally disrupted by Wu Yun, a resigned voice sounded out from a nearby building. As the crowd turned to look, they saw a middle-aged man standing above and looking down at them. Behind him, stood a crowd of burly huge men.

“That man is in charge of the plaza. His name is Wang Jin and he

is an Earthly Yuan practitioner.” Standing behind Lin Dong, Lin Xia softly said. At this instant, she secretly heaved a sigh of relief in her heart. Now that this man had appeared, the curtain will finally close on this drama.

After Wang Jing emerged, Lei Li’s eyebrows frowned as he realized that today would be a difficult occasion to make his move. As the undulating Yuan Power dissipated in his palm, he turned to look at Lin Dong before coldly saying: “You got lucky today. Rest assured, when the Qingyang Hunt arrives, I will make sure to take ‘special care’ of you. Since I promised to retrieve the slap you gave to Ting-er, I will make sure to keep my word...”

“Also, Wu Yun, I will definitely give you a good beating during the hunt. When that time arrives, don’t cower away...”

As he finished, Lei Li let out a sneer and turned to leave with Xie Yingying and the rest. In the following days, he knew that once he advanced to Earthly Yuan level, he could easily handle both Lin Dong and Wu Yun together.

As he gazed at Lei Li’s back, Lin Dong slightly narrowed his eyes as a smile formed on his lips. Qingyang Town Hunt, he was now starting to look forward to it...

Chapter 36: Family Gathering

As Lin Xia and the rest saw Lei Li finally depart, they secretly heaved a sigh of relief in their hearts. Although Lin Dong had displayed an astonishing strength during this period of time, even they did not favour Lin Dong's odds against the reputed genius Lei Li. Therefore, it would be best to avoid a fight.

“Hehe, Lin Xia, seems like a remarkable fellow has finally emerged from the Lin Family.” After he saw Lei Li left, Wu Yun turned and swept his gaze across Lin Dong before he finally looked at Lin Xia and smiled.

Lin Xia rolled her eyes in response. Soon after, she patted Lin Dong's shoulders. With a proud expression, she said: “Of course. Given Lin Dong-biao-de's speed, he can easily surpass all of you.”

Lin Dong shook his head in resignation as he saw how much faith Lin Xia had placed in him. Then, with a smile, he told Wu Yun: “Thank you for helping out today.”

He obviously realized that Wu Yun intervened in order to create chaos and prevent Lei Li from attacking him peacefully.

“No need for thanks. After all, we are at loggerheads with Lei Li too. If I can make him suffer, I will gladly do it.” Wu Yun smiled as he flicked his hand. He did not display any airs in front of Lin Dong. Wu Yun had observed during the short exchange with Lei Li, that the latter was in no way weaker than himself.

Lin Dong smiled. It seems like Raging Blade Dojo and the Lei and Xie Family did not have a good relationship. In that case, it was probably good news for the Lin Family. After all, if these three major factions allied, even with Lin Xiao's return, the Lin Family would definitely be overpowered.

“It's getting late, I will make a move first. Haha, Lin Dong, I will see you at the hunt again. However, when that times comes, let's hope for a good fight.”

The two of them chatted for a while before Wu Yun smiled and waved goodbye. Then, he left with his people.

“Let's return as well.”

As he saw the place emptying out, Lin Dong smiled and turned to tell Lin Xia and the rest.

“Sure.”

After the dramatic conflict previously, Lin Xia and the rest did not wish to stay any longer and immediately nodded their heads. Under the crowd's watchful gaze, a stream of people exited the scene.

...

When they returned to the Lin Family, Lin Dong and Qing Tian did not immediately return to their little hill top. After all, it was

the end of the month and also time for the Lin Family's Gathering. During this time, every key member of the Lin Family would gather together and report all the various events that had occurred in the past month.

In the past, Lin Dong was not invited to this gathering. However, ever since the Family Competition, his status within the Lin Family has skyrocketed. As such, he now had a place in this Family Gathering.

A full moon hung in the clear night sky as the cooling moonlight poured onto the ground and enveloped the earth.

The Lin Family's backyard was very crowded as tens of people laughed and talked merrily around a large round table.

Lin Dong was seated at the left corner, and beside him were Lin Xia, Lin Hong and other elite younger generation members of the Lin Family.

At this Family Gathering, the only joyous occasion for Lin Dong was finally seeing Lin Xiao, who had been busily handling the affairs of the Blazing Manor.

Naturally, Lin Zhentian was seated at the head of the dinner table. Right now, the old man was chatting with Lin Xiao and asking him for the latest updates regarding the Blazing Manor. After a short inquiry, he nodded his head in satisfaction before he finally turned to look cheerfully at Lin Dong.

“Today, I received a piece of news. Turns out, these young fellas have clashed with the younger generation members from the Xie Family. In the end, they even attracted the attention of Lei Li.”

Everyone’s attention was immediately directed towards Lin Zhentian. Upon hearing these words, the expression on some adults darkened as they harshly stared at their own children.

These kind of events tend to happen frequently. However, each time, these little brats would return with their tails between their legs, causing their parents to be slightly frustrated. Yet when their parents tried to reason with the parents of the responsible parties, they were often unsuccessful as the other party would simply dismissed it as a childish dispute.

“Father, this matter was likely caused by my daughter Lin Xia. When I return, I will teach her a lesson.” Lin Ken, who was sitting to one side, growled.

“Haha, no need to worry. This time, they did not embarrass our Lin Family.”

Lin Zhentian smiled as he waved his hands. In fact, it seems like this old man was quite happy. He cheerfully continued: “Turns out that this little brat Lin Dong has even more hidden potential than his father Lin Xiao. He not only dismissed two Tempered Body 7th Layer youngsters, but he even managed to stop Lei Li. This is a highly praiseworthy achievement.”

“Oh?”

Upon hearing these words, the crowd were slightly shocked. Lin Xiao was even more stunned as he clearly did not expect that Lin Dong was not defeated even after clashing with Lei Li.

“Is that true?” Lin Xiao could not help but ask.

Under the watchful gaze of the crowd, Lin Dong was forced to nod his head as he replied: “I used Penetrating Fist, whereas Lei Li did not use any martial arts. It should not be counted as a draw.”

“However, Lei Li had long advanced to Tempered Body 9th Layer. It is remarkable that you were able to use Penetrating Fist to bridge that gap.” Lin Ken smiled and said.

“Lin Dong should have advanced to Tempered Body 8th Layer right?” Lin Zhentian smiled from ear to ear.

Lin Dong secretly sighed in his heart as he nodded his head.

“Good, good grandson. Looks like our Lin Family has finally produced a genius that can match up to Lei Family!” Lin Zhentian involuntarily let out a hearty laugh as he saw Lin Dong nodding his head. Upon hearing this, Lin Xiao and Lin Ken also let out a chuckle while a complicated expression surfaced on Lin Mang’s face.

“There is only four months left before the hunt. During this period, you must work hard. If you require anything, feel free to

say. Anything that I can provide shall be yours!” Lin Zhentian announced with a smile as he stroked his beard.

At these words, many people in the crowd were stunned. Lin Zhentian words had evidently displayed his intentions to treat Lin Dong as the most precious core member to nurture. Similar to Lin Xiao in the past.

Envy surfaced in Lin Xia and the rest. However, Lin Dong’s recent progress and achievements were indeed something no one could replicate.

“Thank you, Grandpa.”

As he observed the expressions from the crowd, although Lin Dong did not verbally reject, in his heart, he shook his head. After all, he had the Mysterious Stone Talisman, thus the Lin Family’s resources now held little appeal for him.

Of course, he was not going to tell them. Furthermore, even if he did not need the resources from the Lin Family, he would occasionally ask from them. After all, he did not want to arouse suspicion as he relied on the godly training speed the stone talisman provided him.

Lin Zhentian waved his hands as he continued discussing other matters with the family. Eventually, this Family Gathering ended.

As Lin Zhentian walked away, a clear and bright laughter could

still be heard. Lin Dong lightly clenched his fist as he understood that the old man had placed all his hopes on this grandson. Just like how he had placed all his hopes on Lin Xiao back then.

“Grandpa, rest assured. I will fulfill your wish.”

Lin Dong muttered to himself. Soon after, he lifted his head as a slightly icy smile emerged on his face.

“Of course...there’s still that fellow called Lin Langtian...”

Chapter 37: Breakthrough

In his room, Lin Dong sat on his bed as he very carefully took out a wooden box hidden in his clothes and then took out a Yellow Mud Fruit from within.

As the Yellow Mud Fruit was exposed, a delightful fragrance was emitted that could captivate anyone nearby.

Lin Dong gazed at this Yellow Mud Fruit as he placed it into his right palm. His thoughts twitched, urging a trace of Yuan Power to flow from the Yuan Power Seed within him into the Stone Talisman that was embedded within his palm.

“Humm!”

As the Yuan Power gushed in, Lin Dong could see the faint mysterious symbols on the underside of the skin of his palm start to glow as traces of a bright light seeped out from the pores of his palm and shined on the Yellow Mud Fruit.

The Yellow Mud Fruit rapidly wilted as the mysterious light shone on it. As the light faded, two dark-yellow pills laid quietly in Lin Dong’s palm.

Upon witnessing this miraculous scene, awe filled Lin Dong’s eyes as his fascination with the Stone Talisman once again deepened.

“It is said that some extremely powerful individuals are able to crystalize mental energy into symbols which possess all kinds of miraculous effects. Perhaps this was how the Stone Talisman was formed?

Lin Dong grabbed onto the lukewarm pills as he contemplated. He had occasionally heard of such rumours, but these stories originated from far away and he yet to experience the outside world to confirm them.

Compared to the large and majestic Great Yan Dynasty, Qingyang Town was simply too small...

“One day, I must venture into the outside world...”

Lin Dong smiled, deep in his heart an adventurous spirit emerged. He was confident that he would not be confined to this tiny Qingyang town!

“However, before that, lets start training first.”

The adventurous spirit within Lin Dong’s heart was swiftly washed off by cold reality as he helplessly spread out his arms. Right now, he was not even the top dog in Qingyang Town. How could he hope to venture out into the exciting yet dangerous outside world.

As he popped the dark-yellow pill into his mouth, Lin Dong sat on his bed as he felt a stream of pure medicinal power spread

throughout his body. A smile formed on his face as he concentrated on absorbing the medicinal power, allowing the Yuan Power Seed within his inner channels to grow.

...

Ever since the fight with the younger generation of the Xie Family, in particular, the fact that he had not lost even against Lei Li. Lin Dong's reputation among the younger generation in the Lin Family suddenly skyrocketed. In fact, his reputation now exceeded Lin Xia's and Lin Hong's.

Young people tend to be rash and hot-blooded. In the past, whenever they clashed with the younger generation members from the Lei and Xie Families, they always came out on the losing end, forced to run away with their tails between their legs. However, thanks to Lin Dong, the situation has now turned for the better. At the very least, whenever the younger generation members in Lin Family encounter other younger generation members from Xie Family, the latter no longer dared to bully them outright.

Lin Dong was nonchalant even as his reputation surged. Rather, he chose to focus most of his time on training. Even when he occasionally visited the Lin Family, he would go straight to the Martial Arts Library. Whenever other younger generation members invited him to hang out with them, he would politely decline. Hence, he did not cause much ripples in Qingyang Town.

Two months swiftly passed as Lin Dong maintained this quiet lifestyle...

During these two month's time, Lin Dong did not once neglect his training. Thanks to his diligence, he could see the Yuan Power Seed residing within his inner channels grow more concentrated and bigger. Sometimes, when the Yuan Power Seed tried to breakthrough the Dan Tian, Lin Dong could faintly feel that the once impenetrable Dan Tian barrier, had begun to waver slightly.

During these two months of training, Lin Dong had completely used up all ten of the Yellow Mud Fruit Pills and the two Flaming Crimson Reishi pills he had. Therefore, he was forced to return to the underground bazaar and exchange the diluted Stone Talisman Ling Liquid for another ten stalks of Grade 3 Elixirs. This ensured that he had a constant supply during these two months.

Of course, when he returned to the bazaar, Lin Dong carefully chose another underground location. After all, it was best to be cautious when handling the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid.

During these two months, although Lin Dong made remarkable progress, Qing Tan had completely trumped him.

Perhaps it was due to her mysterious body constitution. Though Qing Tan rarely used elixirs, her training progress was almost as fast as Lin Dong, even with help from the Stone Talisman.

Qing Tan had smoothly progressed to Tempered Body 7th Layer. Even though she did not undergo rigorous training, her body seemed to absorb the Yuan Power between Heaven and Earth at a much more rapid pace than normal.

Lin Dong was stunned as he faced this peculiar situation. Once, when Lin Xiao returned home and learned about this matter, he too displayed the same shocked reaction. After much pondering, they were still unable to make heads or tails of the situation. In the end, they decided to attribute it to Qing Tan's unique body constitution.

Even though the facts remained fuzzy, Lin Xiao and Lin Dong could faintly feel that Qing Tan's body was indeed unique. However, this was both a cause for celebration and woe. After much discussion, both of them decided that it would be best to keep this matter a secret. After all, if news got out, it may lead to some unexpected problems.

Besides, after witnessing Qing Tan's rapid training progress, Lin Dong went to the Martial Arts Library to find some martial arts that were more suited for girls. After perfecting those martial arts using the Stone Talisman Glowing Shadow, he then personally taught them to Qing Tan, to allow her to protect herself.

...

As the Qingyang Town Hunt approaches, Qingyang Town got increasingly crowded. Even though there were still about two months before the hunt, many people were already excitedly discussing about it.

Everyone knew that his hunt was a guise for Qingyang Town's major factions to compete with each other. During each hunt, each

faction would donate prizes, and of course, these prizes tend to be very lucrative. Naturally, the faction that won would be able to claim all the prizes. In past hunts, the Lei and Xie Families were able to take advantage of this fact to claim several exorbitant gifts from the Lin Family and the Raging Blade Dojo.

For the upcoming hunt, naturally, many people were speculating about who would emerge as the eventual victor among the four major factions. Of course, the faction that was heavily favoured was still the Lei Family. After all, they were the most well-established faction in Qingyang Town and they had vast resources to expend. Furthermore, up till now, no one had been able to threaten Lei Li's position as the number one younger generation member in Qingyang Town.

In fact, it was rumoured that Lei Li will advance to Earthly Yuan level before the hunt began. If so, the Lei Family would have about an 80% chance of victory for the upcoming hunt...

Under the brilliance of Lei Li, the younger generation members in the rest of the three major factions seemed lackluster in comparison.

...

Lin Dong did not know much about these speculations and discussions as he continued his seclusion to focus on his training. Nonetheless, even if he knew, he would probably ignore them as he knew that the future was not set in stone.

As he trained quietly, Lin Dong had managed to achieve excellent results in these two months. During this period, he had tried several hundred times to breakthrough the Yuan Barrier. Towards the end of the two months, he decided to conserve and concentrate all his resources and finally managed to breakthrough the Yuan Dan Barrier!

And when the Yuan Power Seed finally broke through and entered the Yuan Dan, to the delight of an excited Lin Dong, he could feel a transformation occurring within every part of his body...

That sensation was akin to a submerged dragon soaring into the sky, or a fish finally released into the ocean.

Chapter 38: Change

Advancing to Tempered Body 9th Layer did not come as a big surprise to Lin Dong. After two additional months of training, plus the liberal use of elixirs, the Yuan Power Seed in his body long ago attained enough strength to overcome the Yuan Tian Barrier.

The reason why Lin Dong waited was because he was highly ambitious. After he advanced to the 9th Layer, he wanted to immediately try for Earthly Yuan level!

This idea could be considered slightly insane. Even though Tempered Body 9th Layer and Earthly Yuan level were only one step away, there was huge gulf between the two of them. In plain terms, an Earthly Yuan practitioner could easily dispatch several individuals at Tempered Body 9th Layer. This illustrated the vast chasm between the two.

When most people reached Tempered Body 9th Layer, they would usually resume their regular training. Only when the Yuan Power within their Dan Tian had reached a certain level, would they dare to advance to Earthly Yuan level. In fact, only a crazy handful dared to attempt something similar to Lin Dong.

Of course, even though this move sounded insane, it was not impossible for Lin Dong to pull it off. After all, his Yuan Power Seed was already much more powerful than most people. Furthermore, he had absorbed a huge amount of Elixir Pills and done extensive preparations. Therefore, he had a chance.

“Huff.”

Like an arrow, a mouthful of white smoke was coughed out from Lin Dong’s throat. Lin Dong’s eyes gently opened as a warm sensation filled his lower abdomen, causing his entire body to feel as if it was brimming with energy.

“It feels really different after I opened my Dan Tian...”

As he felt the changes within his body, Lin Dong’s spirits were slightly lifted. Opening one’s Dan Tian was extremely important for any practitioner as it was the most crucial and fundamental step!

“Later, I would be able to train in Secret Arts after reaching Earthly Yuan level. At that point, the might of my Yuan Power will also increase dramatically...”

Secret Arts. These were merely two simple words. Yet, casually mentioning these words could lead to devastating conflicts. After all, secret arts were completely different from normal martial arts. Even though martial arts could utilize the might of one’s Yuan Power, secret arts can boost one’s Yuan Power from its roots!

Based on what scarce information Lin Dong knew, secret arts also had different categories. However, they were not as complex as martial arts because they only had three categories.

From lowest to highest, third-tier secret arts, second-tier secret

arts, and first-tier secret arts. It was a simple yet effective classification.

The Lin Family also had one secret arts manual but it was only third-tier. Nonetheless, that manual was personally safeguarded by Lin Zhentian. Within the Family, only the practitioners that have advanced to Earthly Yuan level can know its existence and study it.

With regards to that secret arts manual, Lin Dong had very occasionally heard Lin Xiao mentioning it. Even though he did not fully comprehend, he still knew how important that thing was.

On his bed, Lin Dong shook his head as he tried to remove any distracting thoughts in his mind. It was still too early to think about secret arts. After all, once he officially advanced to Earthly Yuan level, Lin Zhentian would surely deliver that secret arts manual to him on a silver platter.

Lin Dong reached below his pillow and took out two bottles. Contained within the first bottle were ten brightly colored Elixir Pills, while the other contained numerous white Yin Pearls which emitted a forbiddingly cold aura.

Lin Dong removed two Elixir Pills and popped them into his mouth. Approximately half an hour later, he managed to fully absorb the medicinal power into his Dan Tian and he felt the amount of Yuan Power in his Dan Tian surge.

As he felt the vibrations in his Dan Tian's Yuan Power, Lin Dong removed a Yin Pearl from the other bottle. Even though he had

covered his palm with a layer of Yuan Power, he could still feel a stab of pain from the cold aura.

The so-called Earthly Yuan level was basically fusing the Yuan Power in one's body with Yin Energy, thereby strengthening one's Yuan Power. Henceforth, the most important step was absorbing the Yin Energy from between Heaven and Earth.

However, Lin Dong did not care for Yin Energy that existed between Heaven and Earth. After all, the Yin Energy contained within these Yin Pearls, that originated from Qing Tan's body, were of Grade 5 quality. Therefore, if he successfully combined them with his Yuan Power, it would be boosted to a much larger extent.

As he gripped the Yin Pearl, Lin Dong sucked in a deep breath before he straightaway popped it into his mouth without the slightest hesitation.

When the Yin Pearl entered his body, Lin Dong's body instantaneously stiffened as chilling cold air rapidly spread throughout his body and even his skin was swiftly covered in a layer of frost.

Chilling cold air was constantly emitted from his body, however thanks to his prior training, Lin Dong's body was already tough enough to withstand the cold.

“Brr brr...”

Lin Dong's face turned pale as his teeth chattered nonstop. He was aware of the Yin Pearl entering his body and going straight into his Dan Tian. Once it had reached its final destination, it immediately caused an upheaval...

Just as he experienced the explosive impact of his Yuan Power colliding with the Yin Energy, Lin Dong's facial expression changed. He realized that he may have overextended himself as the Yuan Power within his Dan Tian was unable to hold back the Yin Energy!

“Pfffff!”

The commotion in his Dan Tian gradually intensified. Approximately ten minutes later, a healthy red glow returned to Lin Dong's cheeks as he involuntarily spit out a mouthful of blood. Contained within that mouthful of blood, were lumps of ice bits.

Evidently, Lin Dong's latest endeavour had failed.

“What a pity...”

As Lin Dong wiped off the bloodstains at the corner his mouth, a healthy red glow gradually returned to his pale cheeks. At first, he shook his head in resignation. However, after a moment of contemplation, he realized that even though his attempt to rush to Earthly Yuan level has failed, he had learnt much from this experience. Furthermore, he managed to gain some progress as well. After all, there was now a trace of Yin Energy within his Dan Tian and it had successfully combined with his Yuan Power.

Therefore, even though it was a tiny step, this was still a small improvement.

As he kept the bottles, Lin Dong dripped two drops of Stone Talisman Ling Liquid into his mouth before he left his room. Even though he only managed to harvest a tiny trace of Yin Energy from one Yin Pearl, he was not troubled as he had a sufficient supply of Yin Pearls. Furthermore, after this experience, he was confident that he would be more successful the next time....

It's only a matter of time before he reached Earthly Yuan level.

...

Time passes like flowing water, in the blink of an eye, autumn had left as winter approached. Snowflakes danced in the air as they gently floated to the ground, causing the land to sparkle. It was truly a beautiful sight.

As Qingyang Town was slowly surrounded by snow, the atmosphere in the town gradually reached its peak. This was because there were only ten days left before the Qingyang Town Hunt began.

...

In a snow-filled open area within the woods, two figures crossed blows. As their palms and fists collided, the impact caused the snowflakes in their surroundings to be completely scattered.

Two figures, one was steady while the other was graceful like a butterfly as she swung her jade-like hands. Her movements were especially agile, yet they looked elegant as well.

“Bang!”

As both palms collided, one figure jerked his shoulders as he exerted more force, causing the young lady to hurriedly retreat a few steps.

“I give up. I can’t seem to win.” The young lady pouted as she grudgingly stared at the young man before her.

Lin Dong smiled as he stared at the coy young lady, awe filling his heart. In just a month’s time, with help from him and thanks to Qing Tan’s unique body constitution, she had nearly advanced to Tempered Body 8th Layer. In fact, she was already very close.

Right now, Lin Dong was imparting some martial arts to Qing Tan and she had nearly mastered them. Hence, Qing Tan was no longer helpless like before. In fact, based on Lin Dong’s calculations, the only younger generation members in Lin Family who could defeat her were probably Lin Hong and Lin Xia.

“Lin Dong-ge, in just a few days time, it will be the Qingyang Town Hunt. You must work hard.” Qing Tan sweetly smiled as she approached Lin Dong. Stretching out her tiny hands before gently sweeping off the snowflakes on Lin Dong’s shoulder.

As he stared at the elegant young lady in front of him, Lin Dong smiled as he nodded. He stretched out his palm and intimately patted Qing Tan's tiny head. However, just as his palm touched her, Lin Dong's body froze as a look of surprise filled his eyes.

Under Lin Dong's astonished gaze, the Stone Talisman that was hidden in his palm, suddenly released an explosive light. The instant the light appeared, Qing Tan immediately fainted.

Just as Qing Tan fainted, a strong suction force broke out from Lin Dong's palm. Due to this suction force, the fearsome Chilling Cold within Qing Tan's body was immediately sucked out and violently transferred into Lin Dong's body through his palm.

As he was invaded by that terrifying Chilling Cold, Lin Dong's body was instantly covered by a thin layer of frost.

Right now, he had turned into an ice-man.

Chapter 39: Earthly Yuan Stage!

The abrupt change caused fear to rise in Lin Dong's heart. The Chilling Cold which had gushed into him from Qing Tan's body was fearsomely powerful and cold. In fact, it was on a whole new level compared to the Chilling Cold contained with the Yin Pearls.

Lin Dong lost control of his body as it was gradually covered in layer after layer of frost. The sensation was akin to having numerous steel needles furiously stabbing every part of his body. Due to that intense pain, Lin Dong's body and its internal organs started to twist and contort in pain, even his blood flow had become sluggish....

All these signs indicated that he was facing a dire situation!

However, as he faced these dire circumstances, Lin Dong was powerless. As he encountered the fearsome beast-like Chilling Cold from Qing Tan's body, he knew that his own power simply paled in comparison. However, he did not understand the reason why there was a sudden change in the Stone Talisman today. After all, this was not the first time he had contact with Qing Tan. Yet, this incident still occurred.

Under the invasion of the Chilling Cold, Lin Dong gradually began to lose consciousness. However, just before he blacked out, the Stone Talisman embedded within his palm finally made its move.

A suction force rapidly erupted from the Stone Talisman. Soon

after, every bit of Yin Energy spread out across Lin Dong's body was rapidly absorbed and swallowed by the Stone Talisman.

“Buzz buzz.”

Right after all the Yin Energy in Lin Dong's body had been drained, the Stone Talisman started vibrating. Moments later, a pulse of icy-blue Yin Energy was directly emitted from the Stone Talisman and it followed Lin Dong's internal channels and rapidly gushed towards his Dan Tian.

Though this pulse of icy-blue Yin Energy seemed like a tiny amount, Lin Dong's remaining consciousness felt a trepidation from this force. He could feel that this pulse of icy-blue Yin Energy was not as simple as it seemed...

That pulse of icy-blue Yin Energy flowed directly into Lin Dong's Dan Tian. Soon after, Lin Dong could feel an extremely fierce battle break out in his Dan Tian again. As the Yin Energy and Yuan Power collided, he could faintly feel tiny bursts of pain from his Dan Tian.

As he faced the ongoing clash, Lin Dong could only sit aside helplessly since he had already lost all control over his body. However, he secretly heaved a sigh of relief as he could sense that the Yin Energy, perhaps due to the Stone Talisman, was not as brutal as he had expected. Therefore, after 70-80% of the Yin Energy had been slowly shaved away by the battle, the Yuan Power and Yin Energy within his Dan Tian finally started to fuse together...

Within his Dan Tian, the two forces gradually fused. The originally colorless Yuan Power suddenly turned a deep blue color. Furthermore, the originally fist-sized Yuan Power Seed suddenly evaporated into an icy dark blue mist. At the fringe of the mist, Lin Dong could vividly feel a trace of Chilling Cold.

Just as the icy dark blue mist was formed, Lin Dong's body violently jolted. Instantly, he felt a fearsome power that he had never known before swiftly surge out from the deepest region of his body before finally dispersing to every nook and cranny of his body.

“Crack crack...”

In this instance, cracks began to appear on the layer of frost surrounding Lin Dong's body as chunks of ice started to fall off.

Lin Dong focused on his Dan Tian. This was the first time he could “see” his own Dan Tian. The icy dark blue mist was especially alluring as it slowly swirled. Circling it, were traces of Yuan Power, tinted with a chill, and readily available for Lin Dong to deploy.

Lin Dong relaxed his mind and left his Dan Tian. With his eyes tightly shut, he could feel a strange ripple spreading out from within his mind. He could now vividly sense every detail of his surroundings up to a ten meter radius.

“Is this Earthly Yuan stage?”

The feeling of being in control caused Lin Dong's body to tremble uncontrollably in excitement. Advancing to Earthly Yuan Stage indicated that he had officially become a true practitioner!

After all, this was the first major checkpoint in the path of training!

In order to breakthrough this hurdle, Lin Dong had slogged hard during this period. However, the unexpected developments today finally helped to fuse the Yin Energy and Yuan Power within his Dan Tian, thereby allowing him to advance to Earthly Yuan Stage!

Receiving this wonderful surprise caused Lin Dong to have a sudden desire to shout out at the heavens and announce his delight. However, he managed to suppress this desire right at the last second.

In the dense forest, the layer of ice on Lin Dong's body had completely fallen off and transformed into a puddle of water on the ground below. Soon after, Lin Dong shook his body, as he gently opened his eyes.

As he opened his eyes, a ray of icy blue light flitted across his eyes before it soon disappeared.

As Lin Dong clenched his fists, he could feel that the power contained within his muscles had grown by several times. In fact, based on his conjecture, one normal punch from him now probably rivalled his Penetrating Fist Tenth Echo from before!

“Huff....”

Lin Dong exhaled a somewhat ice-cold breath, suddenly joining his hands together to form a complicated hand-seal. This was Wonder Gate Seal.

Lin Dong was extremely curious to find out just how powerful Wonder Gate Seal would be after he advanced to this new level of strength.

As Lin Dong skillfully executed different hand-seals, streams of icy blue Yuan Power rapidly flowed from the icy blue mist within his Dan Tian and gathered under Lin Dong's palm.

As that beautiful icy blue Yuan Power enveloped Lin Dong's right palm, a chill rose up, causing the surrounding temperature to fall.

“Bang!”

As he finished the last hand-seal, Lin Dong took a step forward. He immediately slammed his palm into a tree trunk, which was as thick as two thighs, right ahead of him.

The hand-seal exploded and the thick tree was immediately blown apart. Numerous wooden shrapnels flew in every direction. Furthermore, right at the point of impact, there was a layer of frost. If this attack had landed on a human body, just the Yin Energy contained within the Yuan Power alone would cause the

opponent to suffer greatly.

The power of Earthly Yuan practitioners far exceeds any Tempered Body practitioner!

As he witnessed the strength behind his blow, a look of delight surfaced in Lin Dong's eyes. Just as he was about to celebrate, he turned and realized that Qing Tan was still lying unconscious on the ground and instantly an awkward expression surfaced.

The reason why he managed to advance to Earthly Yuan stage was because the Mysterious Stone Talisman had absorbed the fearsome Chilling Cold within Qing Tan body and tamed it before allowing it to enter Lin Dong's Dan Tian. Or else, based on Lin Dong's ability, if he had tried to forcibly absorb the Chilling Cold within Qing Tan's body, he would have probably turned into an ice statue.

“Thank goodness, she is fine. Or else, Father and Mother would definitely kill me.”

After a quick examination, Lin Dong heaved a sigh of relief when he realized that Qing Tan had only fainted. Stroking his right palm, he let out a pained smile before he lifted the beautiful sleeping princess carried her out of the forest.

Thanks to today's unexpected developments, Lin Dong managed to advance to Earthly Yuan stage ahead of his expectations. Nonetheless, it was definitely good news that he could accomplish this step before the Qingyang Town Hunt.

“The Lei and Xie Family have profited so much from my Lin Family. It’s time to make them spit it all out!”

As he carried the young lady back home, a sneer surfaced on Lin Dong’s face.

Chapter 40: The Hunt Begins

As the end of the year approached, the bustling liveliness of Qingyang Town gradually reached its peak as all sorts of people from different factions within hundreds of miles around flocked towards the town. The streets had never been so full.

The main players in this Hunt were the few major factions in Qingyang Town. However, there were also contestants from other factions as well. Of course, competition amongst the smaller groups was nowhere near as heated as the competition between the four major factions. In fact, most of these small factions just wanted to use this occasion to raise the reputation of their families or villages.

Regardless of their respective aims, the Qingyang Town Hunt was arguably the largest event held within several miles. Therefore, any younger generation member that excelled in this event would not only see his own reputation and status skyrocket but also that of his family's.

The Hunt was held on the first day of Lunar New Year and the location was the Monster Arena situated on the outskirts of Qingyang Town. This place had some of the grandest architecture in all the town. The building was especially huge and it encompassed several kilometers of forests and right in its center there was a small hill that had been converted into a giant stage. Seated there, would be numerous guest, all keenly waiting to witness the birth of the newest champion.

...

Countless anticipating individuals waited with bated breaths as the minute-hand on the clock finally ticked down to the day of the Hunt. When it was finally time, the busy atmosphere of Qingyang Town exploded into tsunami of people rushing towards the Monster Arena. The entire place was filled with an awe-inspiring air.

“Is this the starting point of the Hunt?”

Asked Lin Dong, standing on high tower looking as he looked down in surprise at the dense forest.

Standing behind Lin Dong were the core members of the Lin Family. The one leading the group was naturally Grandpa Lin Zhentian, while Lin Xiao, Lin Ken, Lin Mang and the rest stood beside him.

“Yes.”

Upon hearing Lin Dong’s query, Lin Zhentian beamed as he replied. As he gazed at the former, a look of happiness and content surfaced. After Lin Dong’s impressive accomplishments, he had started paying closer attention towards this grandson. During this period of time, he even suggested to teach Lin Dong martial arts personally. However, he was declined by Lin Dong as the latter wanted to focus on improving his body first.

In reality, Lin Dong did not need anyone to teach him martial arts since he had the Stone Talisman glowing shadow.

Furthermore, he was afraid that if someone got too close to him, they might accidentally discover the existence of the Stone Talisman. That would not be good.

“The woods below are connected directly to the mountains. Thus, there will be numerous fierce and vicious creatures. Every ‘Hunt’ participant will wear a tag to identify themselves before they are thrown into the woods. After that, you will have to rely upon your own abilities to survive.”

Lin Xiao smiled before continuing his explanation: “Besides worrying about these wild beasts, you also have to devise ways to snatch ten tags from ten different participants. Only then will you gain the right to enter the giant stage at the center of the woods. Therefore, for this Hunt, you will not only be hunting beasts, but also, hunting people.”

Lin Dong trembled slightly with fear. It turns out that this Hunt was not as simple as he expected. In order to obtain ten tags, he must defeat ten different individuals. Only then, would he gain the right to enter the giant stage. Therefore, once the contestants entered the forest, they would definitely start fighting with each other causing a chaotic scene to unfold.

Furthermore, while they devised ways to obtain tags from other participants, they must also safeguard themselves from wild beasts. Therefore, even the slightest mistake would probably cause one to forfeit his life.

This was no ordinary competition but rather a dangerous event that risked one’s life. This kind of selection process felt a little

cruel.

“There will be approximately one hundred tags. Therefore, only about ten individuals can make it onto the giant stage and many participants will leave in defeat. A truly merciless competition.” Lin Zhentian uttered as he kept his hands behind his back.

Lin Dong nodded. Just a ten percent chance, he had no opening to relax at all.

“Haha, based on Lin Dong’s current strength, he is definitely going to ascend to the giant stage successfully.” Lin Ken said with a smile.

Upon hearing these words, the smile on Lin Zhentian’s face brightened. Barely half a month ago, he got wind of news that Lin Dong had successfully advanced to Tempered Body 9th Layer. This training progress was even more remarkable than Lin Xiao at his peak.

“This time, our Lin Family’s ranking will rest on Lin Dong’s shoulders.”

At these words, a smile involuntarily surfaced on Lin Xiao’s face. As he patted Lin Dong’s shoulder, a look of gratification and pride surfaced in his eyes.

“Haha, Lin Zhentian. It has been a while. Seems like you are still alive.”

Just as the Lin Family were conversing among themselves, a laughter sounded out from nearby. Upon hearing this laughter, Lin Zhentian, Lin Xiao and the rest furrowed their eyebrows as the smile on their faces faded.

Lin Dong turned towards the direction the sound had come from only to see a huge crowd of people approaching them. Wherever this crowd passed, everyone nearby would quickly make way for them and their appearance was especially menacing.

Leading the pack were two people. One of them wore a light-grey silk robe and looked about the same age as Lin Zhentian. Both his eyes were sunken in and he gave off a cold and menacing aura. The other person was a middle aged man, and a smile was constantly plastered on his face. He looked friendly and approachable, however, those who really knew him, knew that this fellow was a smiling tiger.

“That old fellow is the Head of Lei Family, known as Lei Bao. The other one, is the Head of the Xie Family, called Xie Qian. These two are the enemies of our Lin Family and they are scum.” Lin Xia, who was standing beside Lin Dong, softly murmured.

Lin Dong slightly inclined his head as he glanced towards the two of them. He could faintly feel that the two of them were especially powerful. In fact, they should both be at Heavenly Yuan level.

As Lin Dong’s gaze swept over the two of them, he saw two other familiar faces behind them, Lei Li and Xie Yingying.

As if they could feel Lin Dong's glaze, Lei Li and Xie Yingying immediately glared back at him. A smile surfaced on Lei Li's face as he gently swung his palm in the empty air at Lin Dong. Evidently, he still remembered the slap that Lin Dong owed him.

"Old Man Lei, rest assured, my old bones will not enter the coffin before you." Lin Zhentian smiled as he approached the two of them. Without hearing the tone of their voice and judging from their expressions alone, anyone would think that they were the best of friends.

"When one has many worries, it's hard to live a long life..." Lei Bao faintly smiled as he scanned the members of the Lin Family. Finally, his gaze stopped at Lin Xiao and he frowned as he felt a powerful Yuan Energy within the latter. It seems like the rumours that Lin Xiao had recovered his strength were indeed true.

"When one loses so much every hunt, naturally one will be upset. This will definitely hurt one's longevity." Standing beside Lei Bao, Xie Qian uttered with a skin-deep smile.

As they heard the subtle insult in his words, every member of the Lin Family was enraged. However, with a wave of his hand, Lin Zhentian managed to stop everyone before he replied casually: "This time, I am afraid it's going to be your Xie Family that will be upset."

"I heard that a genius has recently emerged from the Lin Family? Let me guess, it should be this fellow?" Lei Bao's sunken eyes

suddenly turned towards Lin Dong as an evil grin surfaced on his wrinkled face.

Lin Dong felt his hair stand on ends when Lei Bao stared at him. This old man was clearly bad news.

“My son only has a small reputation, it’s hardly worth mentioning compared to the Lei Family.” Lin Xiao replied in an indifferent manner as he stepped forward and stood in front of Lin Dong.

“We’ll see once the Hunt begins. Just remember to prepare your gifts for us.” Lei Bao smiled as he lazily waved his hand before leading his people to directly brush past Lin Zhentian and the rest.

Lei Li’s footsteps suddenly paused when he reached Lin Dong. As he glanced towards the latter and the rest of the younger generation members of the Lin Family, he softly murmured: “Lin Dong, there are many fearsome beasts in the forest. You had better be careful. Don’t end up in their bellies, ok?...”

After uttering these words, a sneer surfaced on Lei Li’s face. He glared viciously at Lin Dong before he finally turned to leave.

“That bastard, he is too overbearing!” Lin Xia angrily retorted as she stared daggers at Lei Li’s back.

Lin Dong glanced at Lei Li’s back. He naturally knew that the latter was trying to intimidate him. An icy smile surfaced on his

face as he muttered to himself.

“It’s too early to determine who would end up in the belly of a wild beast...”

Chapter 41: Luo Cheng

Around the monster arena were tens of thousands of stone seats. Today, none of these seats were empty, as the whole place was choked full of people. The mass of black heads bobbing up and down, extended all the way down one's line of sight. This massive crowd was indeed worthy of the biggest event in Qingyang Town.

The Lin Family followed Lin Zhentian to enter the central area of the monster arena. This area had the best view, as not only could you look down upon the dense forests, you could also clearly see anything that happened atop the giant stage.

However, only the factions that held substantial power were allowed into this area. Since the Lin Family had maintained good relations with these other factions, as they entered, quite a few people came forward to exchange greetings with them, while Lin Zhentian replied them all in kind with a cheery smile on his face.

After exchanging pleasantries, Lin Zhentian brought his group to sit in one area. Nearby, were the Xie and Lei Families. Yet, they only glanced once at the Lin Family before turning away. No matter how calm they appeared on the outside, in their hearts, they still held some contempt for the "foreign" Lin Family.

Of course, since he was being slighted by them, Lin Zhentian obviously chose to ignore them as well. Over the years, they had fought both openly and covertly, and if he had not employed various tactics and strategies, the Lin Family would have long been chased out of Qingyang Town like dogs. Thus, even though both Lei and Xie Families disliked the Lin Family, the hatred in Lin

Zhentian's heart far exceeded the realms of mere hostility.

After the Lin Family group seated themselves, many other influential people continued to appear one after another, causing the atmosphere to become even more lively.

Lin Dong was seated on a stone chair at one corner. As he looked downwards at the dense forests, he could faintly hearing the roars of wild beasts from time to time.

However, Lin Dong was not worried about the wild beasts within the forest. With his current strength, as long as he did not encounter a Demonic Beast, he knew that any ordinary beasts were of little threat towards him.

Demonic Beasts were creatures that was even more terrifying than the normal ferocious beasts. In fact, even the lowest tier Demonic Beast was able to easily tear apart a Tempered Body 7th Layer and lower practitioner. Moreover, a higher tier Demonic Beast would possess both intelligence and energy wielding capabilities. An exceptionally frightening killing machine.

Thankfully, Demonic Beasts were generally found hidden deep in the large mountains. Since there were so many people here, it was highly unlikely that any Demonic Beasts would appear. Therefore, the biggest worry in this "Hunt" was still the other participants. After all, in order seize another competitor's tag, these participants would stoop to any level.

Of course, any petty tricks were insignificant in the face of true

power. The current Lin Dong had earned his qualification to maintain this level of self-confidence.

As Lin Dong was sizing up the topography of the forest, he suddenly felt the atmosphere in the monster arena change slightly. He quickly turned his head just in time to see a huge troupe of people entering his particular area. On their chests, a same picture was sewn.

“Raging Blade Dojo.”

The faction that had expanded the swiftest in Qingyang Town. Raging Blade Dojo’s appearance undoubtedly attracted countless gazes.

Likewise, Lin Dong also swept his gaze over the group from the Raging Blade Dojo before stopping at the figure at the front. The figure turned out to be a somewhat lean man, with an expressionless face. On his face, were countless blade scars crisscrossing giving him a menacing aura. Strapped on his waist, a long blade-shaped object was wrapped up in black cloth.

“That is the master of the Raging Blade Dojo, Mad Lightning Blade Luo Cheng. The reason why Raging Blade Dojo was able to rise rapidly, was largely due to him. If I am not mistaken, he is also a Heavenly Yuan Level expert. In fact, he has probably already reached the later stage of Heavenly Yuan Level. From there, it is only one more step to achieve the Yuan Dan Level. Hence, in the entire Qingyang Town, there are probably less than five people who could match up to him.” Lin Xiao whispered to Lin Dong.

Lin Dong nodded in surprise, as he had never expected that Luo Cheng would actually be so powerful.

“When he first arrived at Qingyang Town and planned to establish the Raging Blade Dojo, the Lei and Xie Families both tried to interfere. Hence he directly went to challenge Lei Bao. In the end, though he ate three of Lei Bao’s palm attacks, he left a blade wound on Lei Bao’s chest. His ferocity and willingness to risk his life caused the Lei and Xie Families to burst out in goosebumps. Thus they could only withdraw.”

“Heh heh, Luo Cheng is extremely fierce and pays a lot of attention to any shortcomings. Now, even the Lei and Xie Families do not dare to be too overbearing towards the Raging Blade Dojo. After all, these fellows are all a bunch of stubborn rogues.”

Lin Dong nodded his head in silence. Luo Cheng and Lin Zhentian could both be considered as founders who built up their own factions from scratch. It was just that they took different paths to reach their current positions, and they had different temperaments. Luo Cheng was unyielding, cold and strict while Lin Zhentian was the type to conceal his true strength, while secretly developing it. However, in the end, the two were very capable men.

While Lin Dong and Lin Xiao were speaking in hushed tones, the Raging Blade Dojo crowd approached them. Lin Zhentian stood up as he smiled, clasping his hands together, he respectfully greeted Luo Cheng. In response, a somewhat rigid smile appeared on Luo Cheng’s usually expressionless face. As both of their factions were

despised by the Lei and Xie Families, this helped the Raging Blade Dojo and Lin Family to bond closer together, and hence they had a friendly relationship.

“Heh, as expected, you’ve joined in the Hunt this time.” As Luo Cheng and Lin Zhentian exchanged greetings, a figure emerged before Lin Dong. That figure was Wu Yun, the same man he had met at the bazaar.

Lin Dong had some positive feelings towards Wu Yun, thus he a smile immediately formed on his face as he nodded.

“When the hunt starts, if possible, we should cooperate. After all, Lei Li and Xie Yingying would definitely join hands, and one against two would definitely be troublesome.” Wu Yun chuckled.

Lin Dong nodded in agreement upon hearing Wu Yun’s suggestion.

“Is this Lin Dong, the person who you mentioned could successfully receive a blow from Lei Li?” To one side, Luo Cheng, who was conversing with Lin Zhentian, suddenly turned his head to look at Lin Dong and inquire.

“Lin Dong greets the Master of the Raging Blade Dojo.” Lin Dong humbly scratched head before he respectfully greeted.

Luo Cheng’s sharp gaze carefully swept across Lin Dong’s body before he nodded and remarked: “This is a good seedling, the Lin

Family is fortunate.”

Upon hearing these words, Lin Zhentian stroked his beard as a bright smile surfaced. After all, he knew that Luo Cheng was picky and had rather high standards. Thus, he would not give such positive evaluations lightly.

Luo Cheng was clearly a man of few words. After a short chat, he said goodbye and led the Raging Blade Dojo members to another area to take up their seats.

From start to end, he did not even look at the Lei and Xie Families at all, nor did he have show any intention to greet them. This was something that even Lin Zhentian could only do occasionally, yet Luo Cheng had no qualms in doing it.

With the arrival of the Raging Blade Dojo, the four major factions in Qingyang Town were now all present. Thus, as the sun gradually rose to its zenith, Lei Bao also stood up, as he swept his sunken eyes across the entire place. Under his chilly gaze, the racket in the monster arena slightly toned down, a testament to the influence that the Lei Family held.

“Everyone, today is the busiest day in Qingyang Town. Simply put, for the rules of the hunt, as long as one obtains ten tags, he would obtain the right to enter this giant stage. At there, the true champion of the hunt will be born.”

Amplified by Yuan Power, Lei Bao’s voice reverberated around the entire monster arena, causing every single person to be able to

hear each and every word clearly.

“The tags have already been collected by the various families. Next, distribute these tags to the younger generation participants from your respective families. Finally, all participants shall enter the monster arena and the hunt will begin!”

“Dong-er, take this tag and be extra careful.” Lin Xiao glanced at Lin Zhentian, awaiting his signal. Only when the latter nodded, did Lin Xiao retrieve a black and yellow wooden tile from his clothes. On the wooden tile, was the word ‘Lin’ and some other complicated diagrams.

Under the envious gazes of some Lin Family members, Lin Dong solemnly received the tag. The fact that Lin Zhentian handed the tag over to Lin Xiao first, showed that the former had already decided to allow Lin Dong to participate in the hunt and fight for the Lin Family.

Stuffing the wooden tile securely into his clothes, Lin Dong silently nodded. Without further ado, he looked at the other figures, which were leaping down into the forests from the monster arena. Taking a deep breath, he took two steps forward and positioned himself at the edge of the high platform.

As Lin Dong prepared to leave, nearby, Lei Li and Xie Yingying also strolled forward. As he smiled, Lei Li stared at Lin Dong before he suddenly stuck out a thumb and lightly jabbed it downwards at the latter. Meanwhile, his lips were mouthing out some words.

Although no voice could be heard, Lin Dong recognized the words that were mouthed. Lei Li had said: “Time to repay your debts.”

Looking back at Lei Li, Lin Dong likewise smiled, as his lips also mouthed out some words before he turned to jump off the high platform and descend into the monster arena.

Gazing at Lin Dong’s back, Lei Li’s eye’s slanted his eyes. With a light chuckle, a chilly light flitted across his eyes. He had also understood Lin Dong’s unspoken words.

Lin Dong had said: “I’ll be waiting for you.”

Chapter 42: Fire Python Tiger

Lin Dong gazed at the forest ahead as he rotated his wrist about. Lifting his head to observe the forests around him, he saw a massive crowd of people. The sight caused him to feel a little nauseous and the massive commotion slowly dispersed as the crowd started to spread out.

Right now, there were numerous people heading towards the forest one after another. Everyone was in a state of high alert.

Since the hunt has already begun, Lin Dong did not hesitate any further and he immediately walked at a steady pace towards the dense forest. As more and more people entered the forest, the original hubbub of the crowd gradually died down, filtered away by the forest.

When Lin Dong walked a certain distance into the forest, he suddenly saw the flicker of a few figures nearby. A few vigilant eyes looked at the tag on his body before they retreated. It seems like they had sensed that Lin Dong was not going to be an easy target.

As these people retreated, Lin Dong did not bother chasing after them. Taking his bearings, he decided to head towards the giant stage at the center of the forest. After all, every participants would arrive there eventually and this would save him the hassle of roaming around to hunt them down.

The originally calm forest was suddenly in an uproar after the

huge swarm of people entered. Growls from ferocious beasts were constantly heard and a few panicked screams were also faintly discernable in between. It seems like some unlucky chaps had encountered fearsome beasts that were out of their league.

Nonetheless, Lin Dong did not slow down as he calmly walked towards the center of the forest. A few minutes later, a figure finally appeared in front of him. Only then did he come to a halt and somewhat excitedly looked at the three figures before him.

These three people looked to be around the same age as Lin Dong. Their bodies were toned, well built and tanned, giving them a slightly menacing aura. Moreover, what surprised Lin Dong was that even though most people who had entered the forests were conspiring against each other, the three of them had teamed up with each other.

“Hand over your tag.”

Standing right in the middle of the trio, a tanned young man stared at Lin Dong and said. While he spoke, his two allies slowly spread out and surrounded Lin Dong.

Gazing at the trio who had delivered themselves right into his hands, Lin Dong could not help but chuckle as he shook his head. He strolled forward with no intention of surrendering his body tag.

“Attack!”

Upon witnessing Lin Dong's movements, the trio's expressions darkened as a faint glow appeared on their bodies. Tellingly, it seems like the three of them had reached at least Tempered Body 6th Layer.

As Yuan Power surfaced on the trio, they instantly pounced on Lin Dong viciously.

Even though they had the advantage in numbers, they hardly posed a threat to Lin Dong. Based on his current strength, he could easily defeat the three of them in a blink of an eye. Therefore, merely ten seconds later, the originally menacing trio were now lying helplessly on the floor.

Lin Dong was all smiles as he took their tags before he waved his hand and said: "Thanks."

As he finished, he leisurely strolled past the three of them and continued his journey towards the depths of the forest. A bitter expression surfaced on the trio while they lamented their bad fortune.

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After the trio, Lin Dong met another two other unlucky chaps who wanted to attack him. The two of them were quite strong as they were at Tempered Body 7th Layer. However, to Lin Dong who had already advanced to Earthly Yuan Stage, they were like lambs for the slaughter.

After a relaxing stroll, he successfully collected five tags. In addition to his own tag, he only lacked 4 more before he could attain the right to ascend onto the stone arena.

However, Lin Dong was not anxious. To be frank, with his Earthly Yuan level strength, it was simply a walk in the park for him to cross the forest.

As he continued on his path, besides encountering the fellows who had tried to rob him of his tag, Lin Dong also met with some ferocious beasts. However, they clearly posed little danger towards him and were likewise swiftly dispatched.

Following the passing of time, Lin Dong gradually made his way into the depths of the forest. Right now, the people that he encountered were all quite skilled. After all, you had to have genuine ability to make it this far.

Gradually walking deeper in, Lin Dong managed to obtain two more body tags. In all, he now had eight tags and he was just inches away from fulfilling the criteria. However, what perplexed Lin Dong was that he had yet to encounter Lei Li or Xie Yingying.

Inside the woods, Lin Dong sat down below a huge tree as he took out two biscuits he had prepared and ate them. Then, he closed his eyes as he prepared to take a short break.

“Buzz!”

Just as Lin Dong closed his eyes, a tree branch ahead of him suddenly shook and an arrow appeared and flew towards him.

Just as the arrow was inches away from Lin Dong's body, he suddenly stretched his hand and caught the arrow before he immediately threw the arrow back in the direction it had come from.

As the arrow flew through the woods, a small figure darted out and landed on top of a tree branch and cautiously observed Lin Dong.

Lin Dong leisurely lifted his head and looked at that person. A look of surprise surfaced in his eyes as he realized that it was actually a girl.

On the tree branch stood a young lady in a leather skirt. The skintight attire caused the curves of her slim figure to be clearly visible. Her skin was not white like other girls but rather it was a healthy bronze color. Therefore, she gave off a wild and unruly kind of charm. In fact, this young lady was akin to a small female panther, filled with explosive power and ready to pounce at any moment.

At this instance, that young lady was vigilantly staring at Lin Dong. Held within her hands, was a wooden bow that had already been reloaded.

Of course, Lin Dong was not surprised by the gender of that person. Rather, he was taken back by her swift and adept reflexes.

If he had to guess, this young lady had probably reached Tempered Body 8th Layer, definitely not a weakling.

“If you want the tag on my body, I am afraid you have found the wrong target.” Lin Dong said with a smile after he quickly shoved the dry biscuit in his hand into his mouth.

“You must be Lin Dong?” The young lady garbed in leather suddenly said as she stared at Lin Dong. Her voice was melodious like a young lady, yet it contained a little hint of hoarseness too. This hoarseness also caused her well-developed body to seem even more sexy.

“Yes?” Lin Dong was taken back, he did not expect that the young lady would actually know his name.

“Hehe, I was the one who told her.” Just as Lin Dong replied in astonishment, a laughter sounded out nearby. Soon after, some tree leaves parted to reveal a figure approaching Lin Dong. It was Wu Yun.

At Wu Yun’s arrival, Lin Dong furrowed his eyebrows and asked: “What are you guys planning?”

“Don’t be mistaken. With so many tags around, I will definitely not go after yours. The reason why I looked for you is because I wanted to propose a collaboration.” Wu Yun hurriedly gestured with his hands and said.

“Why cooperate? Based on your abilities, it should be very easy to obtain ten tags.” Lin Dong replied.

“We discovered a Demonic Beast nearby.” Wu Yun softly muttered as he took two steps forward.

“Oh? What kind of Demonic Beast?” Lin Dong lifted his eyebrows. There were actually Demonic Beasts in these woods?

“Fire Python Tiger.” Wu Yun’s voice became even softer.

“Fire Python Tiger... Why would such a creature be here?”

Upon hearing this name, Lin Dong’s palm involuntarily shuddered. Then, with a strange expression, he stared at Wu Yun and said: “Do you have a death wish? A mature Fire Python Beast match up to a Heavenly Yuan Stage practitioner! We can’t deal with it!”

Fire Python Tiger. When Lin Dong was at the Martial Arts Library, he happened to chance across a Demonic Beast index and this Fire Python Tiger was renowned as a ferocious monster. When it matures, it’s power would be equivalent to a Heavenly Yuan Stage practitioner. However, these kind of Demonic Beasts are normally found in the deep mountains, why would one appear here now?

“Don’t worry, that Fire Python Tiger is heavily wounded now. Based on its expression, it seemed to have escaped here from the

deep mountains. More importantly, it had just given birth.” Wu Yun softly said as he stepped closer towards Lin Dong.

“Given birth?”

Upon hearing these two words, Lin Dong immediately took in a deep breath as his facial expression distorted. Fire Python Tigers become extremely aggressive when they mature. Owing to their aggressive nature, the only way to tame them, is to start when they are young. Therefore, anyone who could obtain this Fire Python Tiger cub, would essentially have a pet that could rival a Heavenly Yuan practitioner in the future!

If this news got out, everyone major faction in Qingyang Town would definitely lust after it. After all, even after all these years of development, there were still only four Heavenly Yuan practitioners in the Lin Family.

“Lei Li and Xie Yingying are already heading towards that direction and they have acquired some helpers. Therefore, I can only turn towards you. After all, if we let the Lei and Xie Family obtain that Fire Python Tiger cub, it will only be bad news for both the Lin Family and the Raging Blade Dojo.” Wu Yun said seriously.

Lin Dong furrowed his eyebrows. He did not expect such a sudden development during this hunt. If Xie and Lei Family got news regarding the existence of that Fire Python Tiger cub, Lei Bao might even disregard the entire competition and head down to hunt it personally. Fortunately, the news had not gotten out yet.

“So, how about it?” Wu Yun asked nervously as he looked at Lin Dong’s complicated expression. He knew that Lei Li’s side was powerful and without Lin Dong’s help, he would definitely be unable to grab the prize.

Lin Dong bit his lips. After a moment of silence, he finally nodded his head to the delight of Wu Yun.

“Alright, lets do it!”

Chapter 43: Snatching the Cubs

“Haha, Brother Lin Dong is indeed magnanimous!”

After he saw Lin Dong nod his head, Wu Yun could not help but let out a hearty laugh as an excited smile surfaced on his face.

“Here, let me introduce you guys. This is Mu Lingsha from the Mu Family, my good friend since long ago. Hehe, don’t underestimate her just because she is a lady, she has advanced to Tempered Body 8th Layer and is extremely good at archery. With her on our side, we will have an easier time.” Wu Yun smiled as he pointed towards the slim young lady standing on a tree-branch.

“Mu Family?” Lin Dong was slightly taken back as he nodded his head. This Mu Family was situated within a hundred miles of Qingyang Town and they had quite a reputation. Naturally, Lin Dong had heard of them before.

“Based on my knowledge, there are a total of three Fire Python Tiger cubs. If we succeed, each of us can get one.” Wu Yun smiled as he said.

“It’s too early to be discussing how to split the spoils. After all, the Fire Python Tiger is no ordinary creature. Even if it was heavily injured and just gave birth, it will still be a difficult beast to handle. In fact, we may even sustain some damage.” Lin Dong sighed as he shook his head.

“Ah ha, don’t worry. The Fire Python Tiger is not a problem. The

main issue lies with Lei Li and company. If I am not mistaken, Lei Li should have advanced to Earthly Yuan Stage. Therefore, he is probably the strongest amongst all the contestants.” Wu Yun chuckled before he promptly signed.

“Let’s head over there first, before we assess the situation.” Lin Dong said as he nodded.

Upon hearing these words, Wu Yun also nodded in agreement. He lifted his head to look at Mu Linsha and she promptly leapt off the branch before glancing at Lin Dong and saying: “Follow me.”

Immediately, she dashed towards the forests on the right side with Wu Yun and Lin Dong swiftly behind.

As the three of them ran through the woods, they met several idling contestants who wanted to rob them of their tags. However, whenever any of them tried to make a move, an arrow will rip through the air and pierce the ground before them. The force behind that arrow clearly showed that should the arrow be pointed towards their bodies, it would definitely rip a bloody hole in their bodies.

With the aid of Mu Lingsha’s brilliant archery skills, they three of them had a smooth journey. After they travelled through the woods for approximately ten minutes, Mu Lingsha’s pace slowed down and she deftly hid behind a large tree. Her swift movements clearly demonstrated that she held a great understanding of the forests.

“We have arrived.”

Wu Yun deliberately muffled his voice as he told Lin Dong who was behind.

Upon hearing these words, Lin Dong stealthily took two steps forward. He scanned around before spotting something and concentrating his attention on it.

Imprinted in his eyes, was a spacious forested area. There, stood more than ten people with large wooden spears. Leading the pack were Lei Li and Xie Yingying.

Right in the middle of the group was a towering Demonic Beast. The Demonic Beast was covered in fur that looked like fire and its head resembled that of a fearsome tiger. Its tail was arched over its back, like a snake ready to pounce, and looked exactly like a flaming python.

This was completely similar to what Lin Dong had seen on the Demonic Beast Index. However, the Fire Python Tiger, which was supposed to look majestic and intimidating, seemed extremely weak as fresh blood constantly gushed out from its body, dyeing its surroundings blood red. After witnessing the damage taken by the Fire Python Tiger, Lin Dong now understood why Wu Yun had mentioned that the Fire Python Tiger was hardly a concern.

Based on its injuries, it would eventually bleed to death even if no one made a move. Lei Li was clear on this point as he only led probing attacks on the beast, not willing to directly engage it in

battle. After all, the Fire Python Tiger could match up to a Heavenly Yuan expert and even its final death throes were no laughing matter.

“The Fire Python Tiger Cubs are on the rocks right behind it.” Wu Yun secretly whispered to Lin Dong from behind.

Lin Dong vision instantly turned towards the rocks behind the Fire Python Tiger. Right there, he could see three blood-stained cubs on the rocks. Their eyes were not even open as they squealed and rolled on the rocks in an attempt to stand up.

“These are indeed cubs.”

After witnessing this sight, despite Lin Dong’s level of cool-headedness, a fiery passion could not help but be lit up in his eyes. If he could obtain just one cub, then his Lin Family would effectively gain another Heavenly Yuan Practitioner. This would be a huge score for his Lin Family.

“Hehe, I told you? So, what now?” Wu Yun cheekily smiled after he saw Lin Dong’s expression.

“Let’s wait for the Fire Python Tiger to die first.” Lin Dong took a deep breath as he calmed himself before he softly replied. After all, it would be too risky if that creature was still alive.

“Yes.” After hearing Lin Dong’s suggestion, Wu Yun nodded in agreement.

“At that time, once the Fire Python Tiger dies, I will intervene to stop Lei Li and the rest while Mu Lingsha shall covertly assist me. Wu Yun, your mission is to grab these Fire Python Tiger Cubs. Once you obtain them, you must leave immediately and we will meet back at our rendezvous point.” Lin Dong licked his lips as he told outlined his plan to the rest.

“You are planning to fight them by yourself?” Upon hearing his plan, Wu Yun was shocked. There were about ten of them at Lei Li’s side, furthermore Lei Li had advanced to Earthly Yuan Stage. If Lin Dong were to appear, he would surely be captured in a jiffy.

“Don’t worry, I will not overextend myself.” Lin Dong smiled as he waved his hand.

Upon seeing the smiling expression on Lin Dong’s face, Wu Yun was stunned. Suddenly, a frightening thought flashed in his mind, however he immediately killed it.

“Alright, lets follow your plan. You focus on Lei Li and Xie Yingying. Leave the rest to me, I will stop them.” Mu Lingsha also stared at Lin Dong in shock, yet she did not question him.

“Thank you.” Lin Dong smiled gently. Without another word, he turned to look at the forest.

The situation with the Fire Python Tiger had reached a gruesome stage. As it was being provoked by Lei Li and the rest, it could only sluggishly chase after them. However, as it moved, fresh blood

gushed onto the floor until eventually, even its internal organs began to spill out.

“Thud!”

The injuries sustained were truly fatal. Therefore, after a short chase, the Fire Python Tiger release a roar of despair as it fell on the floor with a thud.

Delight surfaced in Lei Li, Xie Yingying and the rest after they saw the Fire Python Tiger finally breathe it's last breath. A hungry expression quickly replaced their delight as they turned to stare at the three Fire Python Tiger cubs on the rock. A split second later, they dashed towards the cubs.

“Attack!”

Just as Lei Li and the rest rushed forward, Lin Dong released a low growl as he kicked his foot off the ground, shooting forward to obstruct both Lei Li and Xie Yingying.

“Swish swish!”

Just as Lin Dong made his move, Mu Lingsha's beautiful face turned icy. She swiftly pulled her bow back and arrows flew through the woods to promptly stop the rest of the group following behind Lei Li and Xie Yingying.

“Lin Dong!”

This sudden developed caused Lei Li and Xie Yingying to be startled. As they stared at the man blocking their way, an ugly expression surfaced on their faces. Lei Li released a sneer as he heavily stepped off the ground and jumped towards Lin Dong, attacking him with a punch. The powerful force contained within his blow caused the surrounding air to vibrate.

“Since you delivered yourself straight into my hands, don’t blame me!”

Lin Dong lifted his head to gaze at the figure who was rapidly growing bigger before his eyes. Based on the force contained within this punch, Lin Dong understood that Lei Li had indeed advanced to Earthly Yuan Stage. In fact, if this punch was delivered to a Tempered Body 9th Layer practitioner, he would suffer massive injuries.

“Lin Dong, watch out. Dodge quickly!”

As Wu Yun was dashed towards the cubs, he hurriedly shouted out upon witnessing this scene.

However, Lin Dong chose to ignore Wu Yan’s warning. Keeping both of his eyes firmly on Lei Li, he took half a step back while his fingers gripped together. Then, he retaliated with a punch, forcefully countering Lei Li’s powerful blow.

Wu Yun’s face turned pale after he saw Lin Dong’s decision to retaliate. Just as the former was about to retreat and save Lin

Dong, he suddenly saw that at the epicenter, Lei Li's body had actually been blown back. In fact, he landed awkwardly and even took a few steps back, nearly falling to the ground.

The chaotic woods instantly fell silent. Even Xie Yingying gasped in surprise, unable to believe what had just happened. Lei Li had advanced to Earthly Yuan Stage, yet he was blown back by a single punch from Lin Dong!

“Dammit...has that bastard advanced to Earthly Yuan Stage?”

Wu Yun stared at Lin Dong's back in complete shock. The terrifying thought that had flashed in his mind previously was now finally confirmed...

Chapter 44: Success

“Thud thud.”

Lei Li somewhat haggardly stabilized his body as he lifted his head and stared in shock at Lin Dong, involuntarily letting out: “You entered Earthly Yuan Stage too? How is that possible?!”

Lei Li disbelieving voice was like a peal of thunder as it sounded in the eardrums of everyone nearby, shocking them. Immediately, gasps echoed out in the forest ground.

“If you can advance to Earthly Yuan Stage, why can’t I do the same?” Lin Dong smiled as he saw Lei Li’s somewhat frightened and doubtful expression. It was like he had seen a ghost.

“You!”

Lei Li’s face twitched as his body began to tremble uncontrollably. He had started his training three years ago and with the aid of the bountiful resources from the Lei Family, he finally managed to advance to Earthly Yuan Stage just two months before. However, what about Lin Dong? Based on his knowledge, the latter only started training approximately one year ago!

In just one year’s time, he had caught up to his three years of training!

How incredulous is that? That kind of progress was something

Lei Li never ever heard of!

“Impossible!”

Lei Li expression constantly changed, eventually settling into a somewhat warped expression as he took two steps forward. He refused to believe that Lin Dong had truly advanced to Earthly Yuan Stage!

“Big Brother Lei Li, they are going to snatch the Fire Python Tiger cubs!” Just as Lei Li was struggling with the turmoil in his heart, the observant Xie Yingying suddenly panicked after she saw Wu Yun climbing onto the rocks.

“Bastard!”

After hearing her words, Lei Li immediately regained his wits. Seeing that Wu Yun had already climbed onto the rocks, rage filled his entire body as a thick Yuan Power immediately exploded from within. Faintly, hints of Yin Energy dotted his Yuan Power. It seems like he had managed to absorb a little Yin Energy into his Yuan Power and successfully fuse them. However, the Yin Energy that he assimilated seemed to be of the ordinary Grade found between Heaven and Earth.

“Lin Dong, I don’t care how you managed to increase your strength, you still lack the qualifications to beat me!”

As Yuan Power surged within his body, Lei Li’s body felt full of

strength as he enjoyed that refreshing power. When he attacked previously, he never expected that Lin Dong's strength had advanced to such terrifying levels. Therefore, he was careless and ended up losing out. Now that he was fully prepared, even if Lin Dong had advanced to Earthly Yuan Stage, he would not easily lose out.

With a roar, Lei Li dashed out with both of his palms bent like eagle claws as he went for Lin Dong's head.

“Yingying, stop Wu Yun!”

Just as he moved to attack Lin Dong, Lei Li once again shouted out.

At Lei Li's shout, Xie Yingying nodded her head. However, right before she could make her move, Lin Dong broke away from Lei Li pursuit and appeared in front of her. With a simple palm attack, he instantly blew Xie Yingying back.

“All of you attack!”

After he saw Lin Dong purposefully avoid him and instead chose to tangle with Xie Yingying, Lei Li's face turned blue as he shouted at the crew behind him that he had hastily assembled.

The crew behind him hesitated after they heard Lei Li's roar. Several of them could only grit their teeth as they remembered the reward that Lei Li had promised them previously. However, just as

they were about to make their move, arrows suddenly flew through the forest and hastily stopped them in their tracks.

While Lin Dong and Mu Lingsha restricted Lei Li and the rest, Wu Yun finally climbed onto the rocks. Taking out a piece of cloth from his chest, he wrapped the three Fire Python Tiger cubs within and swiftly jumped down. Following which he whistled a signal before immediately dashing into the woods and disappearing.

“Go!”

As he heard the whistle, Lin Dong was delighted. He quickly turned to Mu Lingsha’s current position and shouted.

“Swish swish!”

Hidden in the woods, Mu Lingsha lightly nodded as she fired off her remaining arrows before turning to flee.

“Haha, Lei Li. We’ll have our real match when we reach the stage later. However, right now, its time for me to split my spoils...”

After he saw Mu Lingsha’s successful escape and then Lei Li’s fuming expression, Lin Dong felt incredible carefree. He let out a hearty laugh as he stamped off the ground and immediately dashed off. Concurrently, he flung his arms at Lei Li and the rest, violently firing the rock shrapnels hidden within his sleeves to slow them down.

By the time Lei Li deflected those rocks projectiles, he could only see Lin Dong's shadow escaping into the woods. Immediately, he exploded in anger. His furious roars could be heard resounding hatefully throughout the forest.

“Lin Dong, I swear I will kill you!”

As he ran in the dense forest, Lin Dong could hear the angry roars from behind him. However, he only casually smiled. Based on his current strength, he hardly feared Lei Li. Furthermore, he was also not worried about offending Lei and Xie Family. After all, they were already hostile towards the Lin Family. Therefore, why bother?

Lin Dong traversed through the woods like an agile monkey. Approximately ten minutes later, he stopped and scanned his surroundings before he finally sat down below a giant tree.

Soon after, he heard the rustling sounds of leaves from nearby. Next, Wu Yun and Mu Lingsha surfaced in front of Lin Dong.

“Haha, that was wonderful!”

Just as Wu Yun appeared, he involuntarily let out a hearty laugh. Then he looked at Lin Dong with admiration as he chuckled: “Looks like we found the right person. Brother Lin Dong, your training progress is simply sick. In just four month's time, you advanced from Tempered Body 8th Layer to Earthly Yuan Stage.”

“It’s just a fluke.” Lin Dong smiled as he casually replied.

“Let us split our spoils.”

Wu Yun carefully unwrapped the cloth bundle on his back and placed it on a nearby rock. Hidden within this cloth bundle were three tiny blood-stained Fire Python Tiger cubs. As they struggled to crawl around with their tiny bodies, they looked extremely cute. Even Mu Lingsha’s eyes lit up. Even though she was still young, it seems like the motherly instinct was something every female possessed.

“Brother Lin Dong, you’ve contributed the most. You should pick first.” Wu Yun smiled as he said. Standing beside him, Mu Lingsha also nodded her head. Evidently, she agreed as well.

Upon hearing these words, Lin Dong did not bother with any pleasantries as he extended his right palm to gently touch these three cubs. As they felt human contact, these three cubs immediately curled up their tiny bodies.

Lin Dong’s right palm hesitated for a while as it moved back and forth over the three cubs. Moments later, when his palm touched the tiny cub on the left, a glint flashed across his eyes. With a smile, he picked it up in his arms and said: “Here, let me have this one.”

“This one... Brother Lin Dong, this cub seems like the weakest among the three. I’m afraid it will be somewhat difficult to take care of it. Are you sure about this?” Upon witnessing Lin Dong’s

choice, Wu Yun and Mu Lingsha were both stunned as they asked.

“It’s fine, I want it.”

Lin Dong smiled as he shook his head. Naturally, he had a reason for doing so. Just now when he was touching these three cubs with his right palm, he felt a slight vibration from the Stone Talisman embedded within his palm when he touched this tiny cub.

The Stone Talisman was usually extremely quiet, therefore whenever it makes a move, it must have encountered something extraordinary.

Lin Dong lowered his head to look at the tiny Fire Python Tiger cub, which had yet to even open its eyes. Based on his judgement, he could not tell why this little cub was special. Nonetheless, he chose to believe in the Stone Talisman.

“This fellow must be somehow different right?”

Lin Dong hugged the tiny cub as he muttered uncertainly to himself.

Chapter 45: Rising Tension

After they split their battle spoils, Lin Dong and the rest were all smiles. Even Mu Lingsha had a happy expression that reached her cheeks. After all, she came to this “*Hunt*” to strive for a good ranking so as to boost the reputation of the Mu Family. She did not expect to receive such a wonderful gift in the process.

Compared to this Fire Python Tiger cub, the “*Hunt*” had become an insignificant event.

“Let us head to the stage.” Wu Yun carefully cradled his Tiger cub as he smiled and said.

Lin Dong nodded in agreement. Even though he still lacked two more more body tags, he knew that it was not a problem.

“I won’t be going.” Besides them, Mu Lingsha silently muttered as she suddenly shook her head.

Upon hearing these words, Lin Dong and Wu Yun were both stunned. They stared at the tiny cub in Mu Lingsha’s arms before nodding their heads in comprehension. A Fire Python Tiger cub was extremely valuable and if she could successful tame and train it, their Mu Family would have the protection of a Heavenly Yuan Level Fire Python Tiger. That was extremely good news for their entire village!

Furthermore, in the current Mu Family, there was only one person that reached the early stage of Heavenly Yuan Level.

However, a Fire Python Tiger cub would definitely attract the envy of others and if news of this incident got out, the Lei and Xie Families would definitely pursue it. The Lin Family and the Raging Blade Dojo were both well-established factions, thus they were not fearful of the Xie and Lei Families. However, the Mu Family that Mu Lingsha belonged to was different; they were too weak to fight against the Lei and Xie Families. Therefore, the fact that she had the Tiger cub must not be revealed or it would spell calamity for the Mu Family.

“We will keep your secret.” Lin Dong softly said.

“Thank you.” Mu Lingsha gratefully said as she glanced at Lin Dong. Then she cheekily said: “If you are free in the future, you can look me up at Mu Family village. I will bring you around.”

“Haha, it’s a deal.” Wu Yun smiled as he nodded his head.

Since the two of them agreed, Mu Lingsha did not linger any further. After she said her goodbyes, she hid the tiger cub and lept onto a tree branch. Like a swift female panther, she immediately fled towards the outside the woods.

“Let’s go.”

Sending off Mu Lingsha with their gazes, Lin Dong gestured with his hand. Immediately after, he ran towards the center of the woods with Wu Yun swiftly behind.

Only a few of them made it into the deep forest and naturally, these people were quite skilled. Nonetheless, since Lin Dong had advanced to Earthly Yuan Stage, they posed little threat to him. Therefore, moments later, he had obtained the last two more tags.

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During winter, the sunlight did not feel blazing hot but was instead rather comfortable. Seated in the Monster Area were thousands of black bobbing heads. Their gazes were all concentrated on the center of the Monster Arena. Situated there, was an arena atop a small hill.

“Based on my calculations, these participants should reach the arena soon...” At the Lin Family area, Lin Zhentian narrowed his eyes at the arena and smiled while muttering to himself.

“Haha, Father don’t worry. Based on Lin Dong’s strength, as long as he doesn’t encounter Lei Li, it would be easy for him to obtain ten tags.” To his side, Lin Ken chuckled and said.

Upon hearing these words, Lin Zhentian smiled as he nodded his head. Just as he gathered his thoughts, waves of cheers suddenly sounded out from the Monster Arena. Soon after, he saw a few figures appearing on the giant arena. Upon seeing that one familiar figure among them, he secretly heaved a sigh of relief.

On the giant arena, Lin Dong and Wu Yun both revealed themselves. They looked at the huge crowd around them and

marvelled. After all, it was rare to see such this many people all in one place.

Just as Lin Dong and the rest ascended onto the Stone Arena, several judges swiftly arrived and examined the tags in their hand before withdrawing once again.

Not long after, two other figures also appeared on the stone arena. However, plastered on their faces were anger and rage and they immediately turned to glare at Lin Dong and Wu Yun.

Faced with Lei Li's and Xie Yingying's menacing glare, Lin Dong and Wu Yun exchanged a glance before they both chuckled.

“I will not let you so easily snatch away the cubs!”

Upon seeing the two of them laugh, the anger in Lei Li's heart burned even hotter. Promptly, he turned towards the area where the Lei and Xie Families were seated and shouted : “Grandpa, Uncle Xie, just now, me and Xie Yingying encountered a heavily injured Fire Python Tiger and its three new born cubs. After the two of us struggled with it for a long time, we finally killed it. However, right at the last moment, Wu Yun and Lin Dong launched a sneak attack and snatched the three cubs away from us. Please help us address this injustice!”

Everyone in the crowd was stunned when they heard Lei Li's sudden roar. However, right after they heard about the three Fire Python Tiger cubs, the entire crowd burst into an uproar.

“What?!”

Everyone in the audience, no matter the Lei or Xie Family, or even Lin Zhentian and Luo Cheng all immediately stood up as their facial expression changed dramatically. All of them clearly knew the prowess of the Fire Python Tiger, and three cubs represented three potential future Heavenly Yuan practitioners. This power was something that no faction could afford to ignore!

“Three Fire Python Tiger cubs?!”

Lei Bao’s face immediately flushed red. He exchanged a glance with Xie Qian as a glint flashed in his eyes before he turned to ask in a solemn voice: “Is this true?”

On the giant arena, Lin Dong and Wu Yun’s facial expressions slightly changed. They did not expect Lei Li to be so shameless.

“The Fire Python Tiger was already heavily wounded. Does that mean whoever saw it first owns it? If so, tomorrow I will circle around the deep mountains, and every Demonic Beast that I see will belong to me. In the future, if anyone catches them, they will have to compensate me!” Wu Yun’s expression darkened as he retorted with a sneer.

Wu Yun’s cheeky retort immediately caused laughter to erupt in the audience. Some people in the crowd also nodded in agreement to his logic. After all, the Fire Python Tiger belongs to no one. Hence, the cubs should belong to whoever had the ability to obtain them...

“Stop trying to find excuses!” Lei Bao shouted as his face twisted.

“Bang!”

Before Lei Bao’s words could fade, nearby, Luo Cheng immediately slammed his palm onto his stone chair. The strength behind his blow immediately shattered the stone chair as he gripped onto the long sabre on his waist and icily said: “Head of Lei Family, anything your family member speaks is the truth. Yet when my family member speaks, it becomes nonsense? Do you think my Raging Blade Dojo is so easy to bully?”

“Everything in the world will come to those who are fated with it. How can this be counted as stealing! Old Man Lei, don’t be too overbearing.” Lin Zhentian also spoke up in an indifferent manner. When he spoke, Lin Xiao could see his palm slightly trembling in excitement. After all, mentioning the Fire Python Tiger cubs had caused him to lose his cool.

After witnessing that the Lin Family and the Raging Blade Dojo had allied together, Lei Bao’s expression slightly darkened as he icily shouted: “Fire Python Tiger indeed belongs to no one. However, Lei Li had invested effort into this, yet in the end, all the spoils were taken by your people. Therefore, even if the two of you are allied together, you must give me a satisfactory answer!”

After hearing Lei Bao’s tone, everyone could tell that he was highly unwilling to give away the cubs to the Lin Family and the Raging Blade Dojo.

“An answer? Don’t tell me you want the cubs back?” The scar on Luo Cheng’s face was wriggling like a scorpion, as he menacingly replied.

“Master Luo, things are getting heated. This will not be good for any of us. Let me suggest an alternative, as it happens, we are currently having a competition. Why not let whoever wins take away the cubs?” After watching the situation heat up, Xie Qian suddenly suggested.

“Based on words alone, you plan to snatch the cubs away. How can there be such a good deal in this world?” Lin Zhentian sneered as he furrowed his eyebrows. Lei Li and Xie Yingying were both the most outstanding among the younger generation members from their respective families. In fact, the former may have even advanced to Earthly Yuan Stage. Wu Yun may be able to deal with them, however, it was unlikely that Lin Dong would be able to match up to Lei Li.

“I will wager my Steel Wood Manor. During this competition, should Lei Li lose to Lin Dong, then my Steel Wood Manor shall belong to your Lin Family. However, if you lose, that cub will belong to my Lei Family. Lin Zhentian, do you dare to accept this wager?” Lei Bao eye’s flashed as he said.

“Steel Wood Manor?”

Upon hearing these words, not only was Lin Zhentian and Luo Cheng shocked, but even Xie Qian was stunned as well. The Steel

Wood Manor manufactures a unique Steel Wood and it was a significant enterprise in the Lei Family. Lei Bao actually dared to use this Steel Wood Manor as a wager? However, moments later, they regained their wits after they realized that the Lei Family victory was almost guaranteed.

Lin Zhentian facial expression changed irregularly, he was obviously shocked by the stakes. Immediately, he gently shook his head. Even though the wager was lucrative, he knew that their odds were still too low. After all, even though Lin Dong was highly talented, he started training a lot later than Lei Li. If they fought now, he would likely lose.

“Father, let’s drop this notion.....”

Standing behind Lin Zhentian, Lin Ken’s, Lin Xiao’s and Lin Mang’s facial expression changed as they clenched their jaws and softly muttered. If they were to lose the Fire Python Tiger cub because of this wager, it would hardly be worthwhile.

After hearing the three of them, Lin Zhentian sighed in his heart. However, just as he was about to reject, a clear voice suddenly resonated from the Stone Arena, causing everyone to be stunned.

“Alright, our Lin Family accepts your wager!”

Chapter 46: Stunning the Entire Arena

The sudden clear voice caused the entire Monster Arena to quiet down as several uneasy gazes were directed towards Lin Dong, who was standing on the arena.

“Nonsense. These matters are not for you to decide!”

Lin Zhentian promptly shouted. He was shocked by Lin Dong's sudden gesture. He believed that it was Lin Dong's hot-blooded youthfulness that caused him to be unable to put up with their provocations any longer and thus rashly agree to the wager.

Besides Lin Zhentian, Lin Xiao and the rest furrowed their eyebrows. They knew that Lin Dong was clearly a cool and rational person, so why did he suddenly do this?

“Grandpa, trust me.” Even as he faced the numerous doubtful gazes, Lin Dong looked straight at Lin Zhentian and solemnly said.

As he saw the determination in Lin Dong's eyes, Lin Zhentian's eyebrows tightly knitted together. Could Lin Dong really defeat Lei Li?

Currently, Lei Li had probably advanced to Earthly Yuan Stage. Therefore, if Lin Dong wanted to defeat him, he needed to be at Earthly Yuan Stage at least. However, how is that possible? After all, Lin Dong had only started training for approximately a year. The fact that he could reach Tempered Body 9th Layer within a year, was already a remarkable accomplishment. After all, even the

renowned Lin Clan genius, Lin Langtian, took nearly two years before he advanced to Earthly Yuan Stage.

“Hehe, Lin Zhentian. Look at what have you become. Have you lost your drive from before? Even a young man dares to accept our challenge, yet you do not. How disappointing.” Lei Bao coldly mocked as he looked at the indecisive Lin Zhentian.

However, Lin Zhentian ignored the taunts. Instead, he turned around and asked Lin Xiao, Lin Ken and Lin Mang: “What do you all think?”

Upon hearing these words, anxiety and hesitation surfaced on the three of them. Logically speaking, even though the rewards for this wager were highly lucrative, it was too risky. However, there was a greed faintly hidden within their hearts: that they could win both the cub and the Steel Wood Manor.

If their Lin Family could win the Steel Wood Manor, then their profits for each year would rise by approximately forty percent. This was no small amount...

“Lin Dong is a calm and rational child. This kind of sub par provocations clearly do not work on him. However, he should also know that Lei Li has advanced to Earthly Yuan Stage. Since he dares to accept this challenge, he probably has an ace hidden up his sleeve...” Lin Ken murmured in a low voice.

“If Father wishes to gamble, it could be worth a try...”

Upon hearing Lin Ken's suggestion, Lin Zhentian took in a deep breath as he gently shut both of his eyes. Moments later, he opened his eyes, having once again regained his calm. He looked towards Lei Bao and casually said: "Since Old Man Lei persists, this time, our Lin Family will play with you!"

"Lin Dong, it's all up to you now." Lin Zhentian turned and looked at Lin Dong as the words slowly left his mouth.

After hearing this words, a smile surfaced on Lin Dong's face. He gently nodded his head and then looked towards Lei Li, who was standing nearby. The smile on the former's face instantly turned cold.

"Do you really intend to fight Lei Li?" Wu Yun, who was standing beside him, anxiously asked. Even though he knew that Lin Dong had also miraculously advanced to Earthly Yuan stage, he did not favour the latter. After all, Lei Li had trained for a much longer period of time, and he must have complete mastery of various kinds of martial arts.

"Don't you think it's now too late to regret?"

Lin Dong smiled as he passed the Fire Python Tiger cub over to Wu Yun and said: "Help me look after it first. I don't want anything to happen to it when I am fighting."

"Alright, take extra care." Wu Yun helplessly nodded his head while carefully accepting the cub into his arms like a nanny. He looked a little silly.

The “Hunt” was now temporarily put on hold because of this unexpected development. Nonetheless, many people in the crowd were pleased because they could witness a battle between Lin Dong and Lei Li. Furthermore, this match also pitted the Lin Family against the Lei Family. Therefore, to be able to witness such a grand gamble, made this trip totally worthwhile.

The other contestants on the stone arena immediately backed off to create an open area in the middle of the arena. A judge also walked inside to preside over this duel.

Under the watchful gazes of the crowd, Lin Dong slowly strolled to the middle of the arena as his heart gradually calmed down. This duel was extremely important for the Lin Family. Not only was the Fire Python Tiger cub at stake, but even more so, the Lin Family’s reputation as well.

Lin Dong naturally understood how important this duel was. Hence, the reason why he finally agreed to this duel was because he had every confidence that he would emerge victorious!

As Lei Li stretched his neck, his facial expression was somewhat malicious as he stepped into the arena. Staring straight into Lin Dong’s eyes, a menacing glint was reflected in the former’s eyes.

“I will make sure you lose everything!” Standing before Lin Dong, Lei Li declared.

Faced with Lei Li’s threat, Lin Dong only replied with a casual

smile, declining to retort.

“Both parties take your position, let the duel begin!”

After seeing both of them enter the stage, the judge immediately announced as he raised his palm and swung it down.

As the judge’s words faded, Lei Li’s facial expression instantly turned icy-cold. A thick and powerful glow of Yuan Power flickered on the surface of his body. The undulations of his Yuan Power was clearly incomparable to that of a Tempered Body 9th Layer practitioner.

“He has indeed reached Earthly Yuan Stage...”

After seeing Lei Li’s display, a commotion erupted in the Monster Arena. Meanwhile, a prideful smirk emerged on Lei Bao’s face.

However, right before his smirk fully formed, it slowly froze in place. This was because he saw streams of thick and powerful Yuan Power also began to flicker on Lin Dong’s body. Based on its undulations, his Yuan Power definitely did not lose to Lei Li’s!

“Lin Dong has also reached Earthly Yuan Stage?!”

When Yuan Power gushed over Lin Dong’s body, the entire Monster Arena erupted as a look of awe and surprise surfaced on everyone’s faces. They were not too surprised that Lei Li had advanced to Earthly Yuan Stage. However, none of them had ever

expected that Lin Dong, who became the new rising star from the Lin Family in the past half a year, had already reached this step!

“Pa!”

In the Lin Family’s area, the teacup in Lin Zhentian’s hand crashed onto the ground and smashed into pieces. He stared at the young man in the arena unable to believe the scene that was playing right before his very eyes. His mouth twitched as if he were trying to speak, yet he found himself at a complete loss for words.

“Lin Dong.... Since when did he advance To Earthly Yuan Stage?” Lin Ken and Lin Mang were totally taken aback, their mouths feeling somewhat dry as they turned in unison and asked Lin Xiao.

“This... I also have no clue...”

As he met their gazes, a rigid smile surfaced on Lin Xiao’s face. The palm that he had rested on his leg was constantly twitching as an immense pride surged in his heart, causing his entire body to tremble uncontrollably.

Right besides them, Lin Xia, Lin Hong and the rest of the younger generation in the Lin Family stood glued on the spot, their mouths hanging wide open. A feverish gaze faintly burned in their eyes.

“No wonder he dared to accept this duel...” Lin Ken stared at Lin Zhentian as he muttered : “ Father, our Lin Family has finally

produced an outstanding genius...”

Lin Zhentian silently nodded his head as he wiped of the tea stains on his clothes with trembling palms. Then, he lifted his head and softly sucked in a breath. His old eyes were moist while his voice was coarse as he softly cried out: “The heavens are fair...”

Nearby, Lei Bao’s slowly sat back into his chair, ashen faced. A murderous intent faintly flashed within his eyes. Lin Dong’s fearsome progress had terrified him.

This boy must not be allowed to survive!

Chapter 47: Intense Battle

Faced with the thunderous hubbub of the crowd, Lin Dong was not the slightest bit distracted. He kept both eyes tightly peeled on Lei Li as the Yuan Power constantly flowed around his body like a stream.

“Lin Dong, it’s too early to celebrate!”

In Lei Li’s ears, the roars from the Arena felt uncomfortable. He hurriedly stepped forward as both of his palms twisted into a weird angle, all ten of his fingers curled up like the jaw of a deadly snake’s head. With the aid of Yuan Power, cracking sounds could be heard as his palms brushed through the air.

Ling Snake Palm, a Level 2 Martial Arts that leaned towards a soft yet vicious style. From his stance, Lin Dong could tell the Lei Li was very well versed in this martial art. When the latter executed his attack, his palms swayed from side to side, causing opponents to be unable to grasp the attack.

After the preliminary exchange at the woods, Lei Li’s disdain and contempt for Lin Dong had completely vanished. Therefore, the former immediately used his preferred martial arts. The level of force generated by this combination of user and martial art was indeed remarkable.

As he faced Lei Li’s whole hearted offensive, Lin Dong’s facial expression also turned serious. However, he had no plans to retreat. After all, based on his current strength, he knew that he

could take Lei Li head on!

With that thought in mind, Lin Dong straightened his palms and swiftly moved into Eight Desolations Palm stance. Brandishing his palms, the firm and fierce power behind his palms caused the air to swivel as if they had become a pair of invisible cyclones, blowing off every speck of dust in his surroundings.

“Bang bang!”

Both palms collided in an instant. Yuan Power violently undulated and dispersed from the epicenter of the clash. The two exchanged blow after blow at a dizzying speed as a series of deep and low sounds constantly echoed out.

Under the nervous gaze of the crowd, the two figures on the stone arena continued to crisscross and intertwine as they moved. Every attack was met with straight on with another. The vigorous Yuan Power contained within each hit possessed the strength to shatter a boulder!

“To think that Lin Dong can actually match up to Lei Li...”

As they stared at the intense duel between the two contestants in the arena, many people in the crowd could not help but gasp in surprise. Even though Lin Dong had trained for a much shorter time, his Yuan Power and mastery of martial arts was not in the slightest bit weaker than Lei Li.

“This bastard has actually reached such a level of perfection in martial arts!”

As their palms flickered and blurred, Lei Li's expression darkened. He never expected that he would be unable to swiftly dispatch Lin Dong even when he was going full throttle. Furthermore, he did not know why but each time their palms contacted, he could feel a prickly cold sensation from Lin Dong's Yuan Power.

“I cannot let this drag on!”

This discovery caused Lei Li's to suddenly concentrate as he abruptly took a step forward. His body was almost touching Lin Dong's and in that instance, the corners of Lei Li's mouth raised to form a sneer. In a flash, Lei Li's entire body suddenly became akin to a terminator. Fist, elbow, finger, leg and every other part of his body suddenly exploded with a raging strength as he rained down countless blows onto Lin Dong's entire body.

“The Lei Family's Thunderstorm Strikes...”

Standing outside the Arena, Wu Yun facial expression changed when he saw Lei Li's wild and furious offensive. ThunderStorm Strikes was a Level 3 Martial arts, and when it was executed, the opponent would experience a devastating attack like a thunder storm. It was extremely fearsome.

Lin Dong initially panicked as he faced Lei Li's sudden attack. However, he immediately steadied himself and balled up one hand

into a fist while the other formed into a palm. Then, he swung out both his palm and fist as two different set of martial arts were executed concurrently!

“Pa pa pa pa...”

Penetrating Fist with his left fist and Eight Desolations with his right palm. Both palm and fist moved in perfect coordination as Lin Dong executed the two martial arts. A series of clear crisp echos sounded out as he completely received Lei Li's menacing attack!

“Dual-utilization, one hand a fist, the other a palm...” Seated in the Lin Family's area, Lin Zhentian and the rest gasped at this scene. None of them had expected that Lin Dong could actually master and utilize both Penetrating Fist and Eight Desolations Palm to this level!

“This kid is definitely a martial arts genius!”

Lin Zhentian emotionally rubbed his hands together. He suddenly found that, compared to this grandson, the Fire Python Tiger cub and the Steel Wood Manor seemed so insignificant.

Based on the talent that Lin Dong had shown, in time, he will definitely become a legendary figure. At that time, how could the small Qingyang Town be able to tie him down?

Compared to the delight that filled the Lin Family, over at Lei

and Xie Families, the atmosphere was one of dread. Lei Bao and Xie Qian were even more upset, while the rest of the younger generation members in Lei and Xie Families kept their mouths tightly shut. Xie Ting in particular, who had received a slap from Lin Dong at the bazaar, had turned especially pale. She did not expect that in just a few month's time, Lin Dong could actually directly match Lei Li blow for blow.

“The situation now doesn't look good for us? The boy from the Lin Family has hidden himself too well...” Xie Qian approached Lei Bao as he somberly said.

Lei Bao's face sunk inwards as his expression darkened while he twisted the jade ring on his finger. Moments later, he solemnly replied: “ Don't worry. It's not so easy to defeat Lei Li.”

“Pa pa pa...”

On the stone arena, the battle intensified as both parties fists and palms rained heavily down on each other. After being struck at every part of their bodies, both of them were hit, and tear after tear began to emerge on their clothes.

“Bang!”

Yet another powerful exchange caused both Lei Li and Lin Dong to retreat a few steps back.

“Buzz buzz”

Lei Li stamped his foot on the ground and forcefully stabilized his body. As he wiped off the traces of blood at the corner of his mouth, his gaze was like a deadly wolf as his eyes bored holes into Lin Dong. On his right palm, a bright and thick Yuan Power suddenly undulated. In this instance, Lin Dong could sense that Lei Li had concentrated every bit of Yuan Power in his body onto his palm.

As the Yuan Power in Lei Li's body surged to his palm, the glow on his palm gradually grew brighter and brighter. Eventually, it condensed into a glowing ball that was now violently rolling about in his palm.

“The Lei Family's Dashing Lightning!”

When the glowing ball appeared in Lei Li's palm, the expressions on Lin Zhentian and the rest changed in a flash as they involuntarily cried out.

“Level 4 Martial Arts, Dashing Lightning. This is one of the two ultimate martial arts of the Lei Family. I never expected that Lei Li had successfully mastered it!” Outside the arena, Wu Yun also gasped in shock.

Lei Li's complexion was slightly pale as he stared at Lin Dong, yet a cold smile surfaced on the former's face. He was going to utterly destroy Lin Dong!

“Father, quickly ask Lin Dong to surrender. That bastard from

Lei Family plans to kill him!” As Lei Li’s expression turned sinister, Lin Ken hastily said as he saw the murderous glint in Lei Li’s eyes.

Upon hearing these words, Lin Zhentian tightly clenched his fists. After a short moment of hesitation, just as he intended to stand up, Lin Xiao, who was sitting beside him, said in a low voice: “Father, let’s wait a little longer!”

As Lin Dong’s father, he could not explain it, but right now he felt a strange confidence in his son. Somehow, he just knew that Lin Dong would not let him down.

“Buzz”

In the arena, Lei Li swiftly dashed forward as the glowing ball flickered in the hollow of his palm. As the ball streaked through the air, an explosive “chi chi” sound was vividly heard. Imagine if this palm landed on anyone’s body, their life would be forfeit!

“Lin Dong, you lose!”

The sole of Lei Li’s foot stepped off the ground as his body jumped upwards. A thrust from above was aimed at Lin Dong and at this moment, a malevolent expression surfaced on Lei Li’s face.

“Huu....”

Lin Dong lifted his head as the figure rapidly grew bigger before his eyes. He gently exhaled, his face as calm as before. While his

two hands linked together as they began to form a series of complex hand-seals.

“It’s Wonder Gate Seal!”

As Lin Dong’s hand-seals changed in succession, Lin Xiao and Lin Zhentian immediately recognized it. However, their faces instantly paled. After all, this Wonder Gate Seal was merely a Grade 3 Martial Arts, how could it match up to Lei Li’s Dashing Lighting?

While Lin Dong speedily executed the different hand-seals, the Yuan Power within his Dan Tian frantically gushed out of his body and converged at the hand-seals.

“It’s too early for you to celebrate...”

As Yuan Power madly bubbled out, Lin Dong finished the first chapter of Wonder Gate Seal and straightaway executed the second chapter of Wonder Gate Seal in order to counter Lei Li’s Dashing Lightning!

Hand-seals changed at lightning speed as deep blue Yuan Power condensed into a seal made of blue light on his palm. Then, Lin Dong abruptly lifted both palms up and heavily smashed them against the descending Lei Li!

“Boom!”

A forceful Yuan Power undulated and then erupted before

spreading out from the epicenter as a powerful shockwave emerged. Under the watchful gaze of the crowd, a figure flew in the air before heavily slamming onto the ground. A mouthful of fresh blood was violently spat out.

“Lei Li...”

As everyone’s gazes turned to discover the identity of the person who had fallen to the ground, the entire crowd abruptly turned silent. In this sudden silence, every member of the Lei and Xie Families turned deathly pale.....

Chapter 48: Reward

Under the winter sunlight, the colossal Monster Arena sunk into silence. Everyone was shocked as they looked at Lei Li, who was now lying raggedly on the ground.

This outcome surprised nearly the entire crowd. Nobody expected that the number one younger generation member in Qingyang Town would lose to this nobody from the Lin Family.

“He actually won...”

Lin Zhentian, who had stood up previously, now slowly sat back on his stone chair. He could not believe this fairy-tale like ending that just occurred.

“Yay!”

Lin Xia and the rest were also dumbstruck. Moments later, they suddenly rejoiced. All these years, they had been constantly bullied by the younger generation members in the Lei Family. The reason why they could be so smug was because of Lei Li. Now that Lei Li was finally defeated by Lin Dong, they felt extremely joyous.

“Third-son, you’ve raised a wonderful boy...” Lin Zhentian leaned against his chair as he tried to suppress the trembling in his palm, before he turned to speak to Lin Xiao with a smile across his entire face.

To one side, Lin Ken and Lin Mang also gently nodded their heads. At this time, even Lin Mang, who was at loggerheads with Lin Xiao, was left speechless after Lin Dong's spectacular accomplishment. He understood how this felt, after all he could never catch up to Lin Xiao.

Lin Xiao also let out a bitter laugh. Recently, he had been busy with matters at the Blazing Manor. Therefore, Lin Dong had been left to his own devices and so the former was not fully aware of the latter's true prowess. In fact, today's incident not only shocked Lin Zhentian and the rest, but also highly surprised Lin Xiao as well.

“The Wonder Gate Seal that Dong-er used seemed different from what we learnt. That power was not something that the incomplete chapter alone can display.” Lin Xiao suddenly asked suspiciously as he recalled the tyrannical might of Wonder Gate seal from before. After all, the Lei Family's Dashing Lightning was a genuine Level 4 martial art. Just the incomplete Wonder Gate Seal alone was not enough to contend against it.

Upon hearing this query, Lin Zhentian also lightly nodded his head as he furrowed his eyebrows. He did not fully comprehend the reason as well. After all, no matter how hard he tried, he would never have guessed that Lin Dong had improved the martial arts using the Stone Talisman.

While the Lin Family was celebrating, a dreadful atmosphere filled the Lei and Xie Family area. Everyone in the Lei Family was upset after they witnessed this scene. Even Xie Qian could only let out a pained laugh, not daring to talk to them.

This time round, the Lei Family not only lost an important Steel Wood Manor but most importantly, they were outshined by the Lin Family. This would severely affect their reputation and standing.

After the dust settled, the crowd watched attentively as Lin Dong's figure began to appear before their eyes. Right now, the sleeves on both of his arms were shredded due to the previous collision. However, compared to Lei Li's sorry figure, he looked several times better.

“You actually managed to defeat Lei Li.... That's incredible!” As he saw Lin Dong steadily standing on the ground, nearby, Wu Yun hastily rushed over with a smile on his face.

Lin Dong grinned in reply. Right now, he had almost depleted all the Yuan Energy in his Dan Tian. Even though he had advanced to Earthly Yuan Stage, it was still too strenuous for him to execute the second chapter of Wonder Gate Seal. Therefore, he was just like an empty shell now and anyone could easily defeat him.

Lin Dong extended his arms and retrieved his Fire Python Tiger cub before he turned to look at the judge nearby.

Seeing Lin Dong's gaze, the judge finally regained his senses. With a complicated expression, he loudly shouted: “The winner of this duel is Lin Dong from the Lin Family!”

Everyone already saw the results of the duel, therefore none of them were surprised by the verdict. Waves of gasps mixed with

secretive whispers started to spread out in the arena. This duel was truly a feast for one's eyes

Xie Yingying's cheeks constantly twitched as she looked at Lei Li, who had fainted on the ground. Previously, she used to smile sweetly at the latter, but now, the smile on her face has unknowingly died down. After a moment of hesitation, she waved her hands and signaled two Xie Family members to carry Lei Li back to the stands.

“Pfft, this woman is a b*tch.” After he saw Xie Yingying's actions, Wu Yun's lips curled up in disdain as he disgruntledly muttered to Lin Dong.

Upon hearing these words, Lin Dong only smiled. He did not care about the relationship between the two of them. Carrying the cub, he stretched his body and likewise leisurely walked towards the stands.

“Hey, are you not participating in the “Hunt” anymore?” Wu Yun immediately asked after he saw Lin Dong's actions.

“Not participating.....” Lin Dong waved his hand. Based on his current condition, he could no longer continue on in the Hunt Competition. Besides, after this intense duel, there was no point in participating in the “Hunt” anymore. After all, he had already defeated the strongest person in this competition.

As Wu Yun helpless looked on, Lin Dong carried the cub back to the Lin Family area. When he returned, everyone in the Lin

Family, including Lin Zhentian, immediately stood up to gather around him, as if they were protecting something, allowing Lin Dong to very carefully sit back down.

“Take a good rest. You don’t have to participate in the Hunt Competition anymore.” Lin Zhentian said, deeply concerned, while waving his large hands and then gently pressing Lin Dong to sit on the chair. He could tell that Lin Dong’s current condition was quite awful and he naturally would not allow him to continue fighting. After all, Lin Dong was currently the most precious thing in the entire Lin Family and Lin Zhentian could not afford to let any mishap happen to this treasure.

Lin Dong nodded his head in response. To one corner, Lin Xia and the rest also crowded over as they curiously stared at the Fire Python Tiger cub in his arms which had yet to open its eyes.

“Hehe, many thanks to the Lei Family’s for their donations. Please make sure you hand over the Steel Wood Manor within half a month’s time. I trust that the Lei Family will keep their word. Am I right, Old Man Lei?” Lin Zhentian instructed the rest to take care of Lin Dong before he turned around and chuckled as he addressed the Lei Family.

After he heard Lin Zhentian’s chuckle, Lei Bao’s wrinkled face turned blue. Behind him, a member of the Lei Family shouted back angrily: “Lin Zhentian. Your Lin Family got lucky this time. Don’t get too conceited!”

“Pa!”

Just as that man spoke, the enraged Lei Bao immediately turned and slapped him. Soon after, Lei Bao stood up with a dark look in his eyes. He turned to look at Lei Li, who was being carried over, and his eyes began to twitch uncontrollably.

“Leave!”

The watchful gaze of the crowd felt like thousands of arrows penetrating Lei Bao’s back. Ashen faced, he immediately took off and swiftly left the Monster Arena. After witnessing this sight, the rest of the Lei Family could only hurriedly follow.

This time, the Lei Family had finally bitten off more than they could chew!

As he stared at the flustered expressions of the Lei Family members, delight and satisfaction filled the Lin Family bunch. After all, for years, they had been bullied by the Lei Family. However, from now onwards, they could start playing hardball as well.....

“Congratulations.”

With the rest of the Raging Blade Dojo behind him, Luo Cheng walked towards the Lin Family as he respectfully cupped his hands and congratulated Lin Zhentian. Then, with an inquisitive look, he turned to Lin Dong as he said admirably: “It is truly a blessing that the Lin Family could gain such a treasure.”

Upon hearing these words, Lin Zhentian also smiled freely as he nodded his head. After a short conversation with Luo Cheng, he also stood up and left the Arena with the rest of the Lin Family. After all, they were no longer interested in the rest of the competition. Now that the heated battle between Lin Dong and Lei Li was over, the rest of the battles were just side-shows. Hardly worth their time.

Even though Lei Family had given up on the “Hunt”, everyone knew that the main highlight of this show, was the dark-horse that stupefied everybody.

The young man known as Lin Dong.

Chapter 49: Martial Arts Genius

Eventually, the Qingyang Town Hunt was successfully concluded. Though Lin Dong and Lei Li dropped out, causing the “Hunt” to lose some of its glamour, most people were still satisfied with this time’s Hunting Competition. Especially since they managed to witness a grand gamble between the Lei Family and the Lin Family.

As expected, the champion of this “Hunt”, ultimately came from the Raging Blade Dojo. While the Lei and Xie Families, the traditional powerhouses, did not gain a single benefit from this “Hunt”. The Lei Family in particular was even more heavily impacted since they lost an important Steel Wood Manor.

As for the Xie Family, even though they were jealous of the Fire Python Tiger cub that Wu Yun obtained, they knew that based on Xie Yingying’s current strength, she was still lacking compared to Wu Yun. Furthermore, after the precedent set by the Lei Family, they did not dare to wager any of their valuable possessions to gamble with the Raging Blade Dojo. Therefore, they could only give up on the Fire Python Tiger cub.

Therefore, the ultimate victors of this “Hunt” were undoubtedly the Lin Family and the Raging Blade Dojo!

.....

In the Lin Family, ever since Lin Zhentian and the rest returned from the Monster Arena, news of Lin Dong’s impressive victory

over Lei Li spread like wildfire. This sensational news caused everyone to be dumbstruck. However, most of them were also filled with pride upon hearing this news. After all, Lin Dong's accomplishment had skyrocketed the status and reputation of the entire Lin Family.

As nightfall approached, the Lin Family's backyard was filled with lights and peals of laughter.

In the large hall, Lin Zhentian sat at the center with a wide smile on his face. Seated on his right, were neither Lin Ken nor Lin Xiao, but instead Lin Dong.

With regards to this special seating arrangement, Lin Dong felt somewhat resigned. But because of Lin Zhentian's insistence, he had no choice but to sit obediently in this prickly position.

At dinner time, everyone ate as they conversed joyously. Lin Dong glanced at Qing Tan, Lin Xia and the rest, who were seated a distance away from him. He could only roll his eyes and silently eat his meal.

"Heh heh, Dong-er...." After a light chat, Lin Zhentian finally turned to look at Lin Dong who was seated beside him. As Lin Dong saw his beaming grandfather, he felt a little uneasy.

Just as Lin Zhentian spoke, everyone immediately turned to look at Lin Dong.

“After all these years, today was the day where our Lin Family felt the most proud, and it was all thanks to you.” Lin Zhentian stared at the young man beside him as he softly sighed.

“Grandpa, I am part of the Lin Family too.” Lin Dong placed his chopstick down, humbly scratching his head as he replied.

“Haha, well said...” Upon hearing these words, Lin Zhentian let out a content smile. As he turned to look at Lin Xiao and Lin Mang, he said: “I know the two of you have been at loggerheads since young. However, the most important matter for a family, is to stay united. After all, you are both core members of our Family and if we want to become truly formidable, we must not fight among ourselves. If not, the Lin Family will eventually fall.” As he spoke, Lin Zhentian’s facial expression turned increasingly stern.

“Father’s words are correct.”

After he heard Lin Zhentian’s lecture, Lin Xiao respectfully agreed. Sitting beside him, Lin Mang also nodded with a complicated expression on his face.

“It’s good that you all understand.”

Seeing that both of them replied with proper attitudes, Lin Zhentian gently nodded his head. Promptly, he turned to Lin Dong and asked him with a wide smile: “Dong-er, the last martial art that you used against Lei Li today, should be the Wonder Gate Seal from our Lin Family right?”

“Here it comes...”

After hearing these words, Lin Dong’s stomach did a somersault. Lin Zhentian and the rest had evidently seen some discrepancies in the Wonder Gate Seal that he displayed today. However, he was resigned to his fate. After all, the Wonder Gate Seal was only an incomplete manual comparable to a Level 3 Martial Art, how could it ward off the Lei Family’s Level 4 Martial Art Dashing Lightning?”

“Yes, it was indeed Wonder Gate Seal.” Lin Dong braced himself as he replied

“Why was the Wonder Gate Seal that you used somewhat different from the Wonder Gate Seal of the Lin Family?” Lin Zhentian queried suspiciously.

Lin Dong opened and closed his mouth as he contemplated all the possible answers he could give. Immediately, he rejected them all. Finally, he took in a deep breath and said: “The Lin Family’s Wonder Gate Seal is incomplete... I merely slightly improved it...”

“Pa pa pa...”

After Lin Dong spoke, several chopsticks and bowls fell onto the ground. Even Lin Zhentian’s smiling expression stiffened subconsciously.

“Do you mean... That you actually improved the Wonder Gate

Seal on your own?” As he suppressed the raging waves in his heart, Lin Xiao slowly put down his chopsticks as he asked.

“Yes.”

After he saw the even more fearful expression than that of seeing a ghost on faces of the crowd, Lin Dong once again sighed secretly in his heart. Even though what he said was highly incredulous, he wanted to keep the Stone Talisman a secret.

“Gulp.”

In the quiet hall, sounds of people suddenly swallowing their saliva echoed out. Improving Martial Arts? Even though there were many Level 1 Martial Arts, their creators were all highly talented Martial Arts practitioners. Furthermore, the Wonder Gate Seal was not a Level 1 Martial Arts, but at the stage of a Level 3 Martial Arts even though it was incomplete!

The ability to improve a Level 3 Martial Arts, was something that perhaps no one else in entire Qingyang Town could do. In fact, only experts that had advanced to Yuan Dan Stage possess such qualifications!

However, right now Lin Dong claimed to have improved Wonder Gate Seal! Moreover, he was merely at Earthly Stage Yuan. Most importantly, the current Lin Dong was only fifteen years old!

A fifteen years old youngster, yet able to improve a Level 3

Martial Arts. How fearsome is that?

Logically speaking, Lin Zhentian and the rest would definitely dismiss such an incredulous claim. However, after they personally witnessed Lin Dong execute Wonder Gate Seal, they knew that the strength behind it equaled a Level 4 Martial Arts. Therefore, it might actually be plausible that Lin Dong had improved the Wonder Gate Seal.

If this was true, there could only be one logical explanation. As they reached the same conclusion, Lin Zhentian, Lin Xiao and the rest immediately exchanged glances as ecstasy bubbled in their eyes.

A Martial Arts Genius!

They had heard that there existed some people that were especially gifted in Martial Arts. These people could easily master any Martial Arts. Therefore, they were called Martial Arts Geniuses.

However, this was clearly a very rare existence. Did Lin Dong truly possess this level of talent for Martial Arts?

“When Dong-er was learning martial arts, he could indeed grasp them easily.....” Lin Xiao murmured to himself as he recalled the times when he tried to teach Lin Dong Penetrating Fist and Eight Desolations Palms. He faintly remembered that the latter was able to comprehend them rapidly.

After hearing those words, the corners of Lin Zhentian's eyes twitched for a while. With his palm at his chest, he violently gasped a few times. Did a demon-like genius really emerge from their Lin Family?

As he stared at Lin Zhentian and the rest's reactions, Lin Dong was at a loss. He never expected that they would term him as a Martial Arts Genius. After all, he was able to progress rapidly thanks to a perfect "Teacher" and his own determination and hard work.

"There should be several chapters to the Wonder Gate Seal. The manual in the Lin Family only contains the first chapter. I used half a year's time to perfect the second chapter. That was the move that defeated Lei Li." Lin Dong continued.

"If Grandpa is interested, I can teach you all the second chapter of Wonder Gate Seal. As for the remaining chapters, it will depend on whether I can continue to improve the Wonder Gate Seal."

At these words, Lin Zhentian and the rest dropped their jaws as they stared at the earnest young man before them. A dream-like sensation filled their minds as they realized that the Lin Family now seemed to possess another Level 4 Martial Arts?

As the crowd looked at each other, they found themselves at a complete loss. The consecutive surprises today had caused them to begin to feel somewhat numb.....

Chapter 50: Qingyuan Art

After the sensational Hunting Competition ended, Qingyang Town gradually returned to its originally peaceful and quiet days. However, right now there were still many people discussing about the “Hunt” and most of them were talking about the one who outclassed everyone else, Lin Dong.

Lin Dong was not someone who liked to show off. After the Hunting Competition, he spent most of his days quietly in the Lin Family and only went out occasionally. As such, many people were curious about the person who had replaced Lei Li as the strongest younger generation member in Qingyang Town.

...

In the early morning, a dense mist shrouded the mountains behind the Lin Family estate. Within that dense forest, a series of “bang bang” sounds suddenly echoed out.

On an open space within the woods, three human shaped wooden posts were situated in a triangular formation on the ground. At the center of the triangle, a deft figure swiftly dodged, retreated and blocked, managing to ward off all the wooden arms on the wooden posts which attacked every part of his body.

The “bang bang” sound was produced when the wooden arm collided with the human’s arm. From each sound, one could vividly feel the deep and powerful strength behind each blow.

Naturally, that human silhouette was Lin Dong. Right now, he was fully focused on the three wooden posts as he moved deftly through them, dodging and ducking. Moments later, his expression turned serious as two of his fingers curled up and immediately attacked the wooden post in front of him.

“Bang!”

Just as Lin Dong’s two fingers made contact with the wooden post, a bright glow exploded from the top his fingers. Instantly, the sturdy wooden post exploded as wood shrapnels flew out in every direction.

“Bang bang!”

Then, Lin Dong extended one finger from each hand towards the two remaining wooden posts. Immediately, both of them exploded as well, causing the ground to be littered with wood bits.

“The strength of Chun Yuan Finger is truly fearsome!”

Witnessing the destructive potential of his fingers, Lin Dong could not help but nod in satisfaction. This Chun Yuan Finger was the only Level 4 Martial Arts in the Lin Family. After Lin Zhentian and the rest tagged Lin Dong as a Martial Arts Genius, they immediately shoved the manual into Lin Dong’s face.

Of course, since Lin Dong had the aid of the Mysterious Stone Talisman, he could easily learn this Chun Yuan Finger.

Furthermore, this martial art was not as complex as Wonder Gate Seal. Therefore, after a few days of hard work, Lin Dong had already become quite decent in it. And now, after a month's time, Lin Dong had mastered it till he could easily execute it at any time. Of course, that was provided that he had sufficient Yuan Power in his body.

As he finished another part of his training regime, Lin Dong wiped off his sweat as he sat down on a rock nearby. With a serious expression on his face, he then proceeded to take out a yellowish old manual from a pocket in his clothes.

This old manual was the Secret Arts that was personally kept by Lin Zhentian. Yesterday, Lin Dong finally managed to obtain it from his grandfather. Even though it was only a 3rd Tier Secret Arts, if he successfully learnt it, it would still be highly beneficial for him.

Within this month, Lin Dong had also gained a better understanding of Secret Arts.

Basically, Secret Arts was actually a unique method to direct and refine Yuan Power. For example, their Lin Family's "QingYuan Art" was able to unlock 4 hidden channels within one's body. These four channels were directly connected to one's skin. Therefore, after one learns QingYuan Art, they can use activate the Art to unlock these four inner channels and absorb the Yuan Power from between Heaven and Earth. As such, compared to other practitioners who can only absorb from breathing, one would be able to absorb Yuan Power more rapidly.

It is said that 1st Tier Secret Arts are able to unlock tens of hidden channels. In fact, some even more mysterious Secret Arts will teach a unique method to create a constant suction force below one's skin. Such that even when one is not in a state of training, one would be able to constantly absorb Yuan Power from between Heaven and Earth, thereby tempering the body and enriching one's Dan Tian.

Of course, Lin Dong would love to get his hands on those kinds of Secret Arts. However, those manuals were extremely rare and valuable. In fact, even a 3rd Tier Secret Art was a pretty valuable item and most people from ordinary families could never hope to learn these Secret Arts.

Even though he only needed to unlock four channels, this was not an easy feat to accomplish. After all, the human body is a highly complex and filled with many inner channels and numerous mysteries. Most of these inner channels were closed off, and if one wishes to open them, it was not going to be a walk in the park.

Based on Lin Dong's knowledge, he knew that when Lin Zhentian was practising this "QingYuan Art", he took half a year's time before he successfully unlocked all four of his inner channels, whereas Lin Xiao, took three months.

As Lin Dong slowly read through that yellowish manual, he burned every word into his mind. Secret Arts and Martial Arts are two different things. If one fails to master a Martial Art, he can easily give up. However, if one makes a mistake when he attempts to learn Secret Arts, even a small error may cause one to lie in bed for several days, while a major error could cause one's inner

channels to rupture. Therefore, extreme caution must be exercised when one attempts to learn Secret Arts.

As such, even though the book had only ten over pages, Lin Dong took more than an hour to read through it. Finally, he withdrew his gaze and mulled over what he had learnt. Written on the book were numerous detailed descriptions and guidelines. If he followed them closely, it would save him a lot of time.

“Hmm, I wonder if the Mysterious Stone Talisman will help me out when I learn Secret Arts?”

As Lin Dong gently stroked the Secret Arts Manual, his eyes flashed as he suddenly remembered his perfect “mentor”.

At this thought, Lin Dong smiled gently. He unhurriedly shut both of his eyes as he entered into the Spiritual Domain.

Right now, this Spiritual Domain seemed to be brighter than before. The number of glowing figures had also increased to four. They were executing Penetrating Fist, Eight Desolations Palm, Wonder Gate Seal and Chun Yuan Finger.

After entering, the space behind the fourth glowing shadow gradually began to distort. Finally, another glowing shadow appeared. However, this time, the glowing shadow was seated on the ground.

Shortly after this fifth glowing shadow appeared, its body

gradually became translucent as numerous glowing lines, resembling a body's inner channel, began to surface on its body.

When the body became totally transparent, Lin Dong could vividly see a light suddenly emerge amongst the chaotic inner channels. It flowed along one of the inner channels before finally reaching the area just below the surface of the skin.

Upon witnessing this scene, Lin Dong immediately recognized that this was the first inner channel that must be unlocked for "QingYuan Art". This teaching method was several times more engaging and enlightening as compared to the explanations on the manual.

After the first inner channel was lit up, three other channels were consecutively lit up. Thanks to the light and its transparent body, the paths of these four inner channels were extremely clear.

After Lin Dong had committed the paths for these four inner channels to heart, he silently nodded his head. However, just as he was about to leave the Spiritual Domain, he suddenly spotted another inner channel light up and successfully connect to a point on the skin.

"The fifth channel!"

Lin Dong pupils slightly shrunk as he looked at the path of that fifth inner channel. Looks like not only was this Mysterious Stone Talisman able to perfect Martial Arts, it was also able to perfect Secret Arts!

With this discovery, Lin Dong once again returned to his calm self as he kept his eyes peeled on the glowing shadow. He was curious to find out how many additional inner channels the glowing shadow could unlock.

Under Lin Dong's steady gaze, minutes after the fifth channel lit up, another two other inner channels lit up in succession!

Seven inner channels!

As he stared at the twinkling paths of the seven inner channels, Lin Dong involuntarily gasped. This would nearly double the strength of "Qingyuan Art!"

This Mysterious Stone Talisman was truly made by the gods!

Chapter 51: Little Flame

In the misty forest, Lin Dong's tightly shut eyes gradually opened. On his face, some traces of delight lingered. After the improvement done by the glowing shadow, the number of inner channel paths from "QingYun Arts" had increased from four to seven, effectively doubling its effectiveness.

"Huff..."

A white breath of air formed as Lin Dong forcefully exhaled. Soon after, he took out a bottle from within his clothes and poured out two fiery-red Elixir Pills. These two pills were refined from a Grade 3 Elixir, Blaze Fruit. During this month, Lin Dong had secretly went to barter the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid to obtain more elixirs. After all, now that he had advanced to Earthly Yuan Stage, he knew that he needed a large quantity of Elixir Pills to increase his training speed.

Lin Dong popped the two Elixir Pills into his mouth but did not swallow them immediately. Instead, he closed his eyes and with a thought, a surge of deep blue Yuan Power gushed out from his Dan Tian. The Yuan Power first circled inside his body before it entered into an unexplored hidden inner channel.

This hidden inner channel was the first channel that must be opened when one trains in "QingYuan Arts". After the glowing shadow had vividly displayed the route taken previously, Lin Dong was now able to rapidly uncover this hidden inner channel within his body.

As the Yuan Power attempted to flow through this inner channel, it immediately encountered a massive resistance. After all, this hidden channel had never been unlocked before, it was akin to paving a new path through the mountains. An exceedingly difficult task.

Against this resistance, the Yuan power was only able to unlock a small segment of the inner channel before it was used up. However, Lin Dong quickly followed up with another wave of Yuan Power. Just like a hard working labourer, tirelessly hacking away...

Wave upon wave of Yuan Power slowly chipped at the blocked inner channel. Half an hour later, the Yuan Power in Lin Dong's Dan Tian had almost been depleted, however, he had only managed to unblock approximately one-tenth of the channel. Only now did Lin Dong finally understand just how difficult it was to open a channel.

Furthermore, this was only the first inner channel. Subsequent channels would be successively challenging. It was little wonder that even Lin Xiao required three months to fully unlock all four channels.

“Gulp!”

Feeling that the Yuan Power in his Dan Tian was almost depleted, Lin Dong swallowed the two Elixir Pills inside his mouth. As they entered his body through his throat, a stream of pure medicinal power began to spread out before it was slowly absorbed into his Dan Tian. Following which, the dried up feeling in his Dan Tian

gradually faded.

As Yuan Power once again flowed in his body, Lin Dong also continued working to unlock the inner channel.

Unblocking an inner channel was not something that could be accomplished in a day. However, since Lin Dong was blessed with plenty of resources, this was not a problem for him. After replenishing his Dan Tian using Elixir Pills six times, the first inner channel was finally fully unblocked by Lin Dong!

As that inner channel was finally unlocked, Lin Dong abruptly felt more sensitive towards the Yuan Power that flowed through Heaven and Earth. At the skin area where the inner channel lead to, he could also faintly feel a tiny suction force there, absorbing the Yuan Power from Heaven and Earth. The absorbed Yuan Power circulated in his body before gushing into his Dan Tian.

Sensing his body's increased Yuan Power absorption rate, a flash of delight surfaced in Lin Dong's eyes. After he had trained in Secret Arts, he could feel an indescribable increase in his power.

Lin Dong cheerfully opened his eyes only to find that nightfall had arrived, at which smacked his lips. Time really flies by while he trained.

He stretched his body and kept the "QingYuan Arts" manual in his clothes. In a mere day, he had already unlocked the first inner channel. If Lin Zhentian and the rest knew about his progress, they would likely be shocked once again. However, Lin Dong did not

feel like this was a huge achievement. After all, he had utilized so many Elixir Pills to aid his training. If his progress were not at least at this speed, then something would be wrong.

As he stood up, Lin Dong suddenly whistled towards the deep forest. Minutes later, a fiery-red shadow suddenly emerged from the woods and leapt into Lin Dong's arms.

Thanks to the final rays of the setting sun, the face of the fiery-red shadow was revealed. It was a creature that was about the size of a small dog and its body was colored a fiery-red, as if the beast itself was on fire. From its shape, it seemed like a tiger cub, yet its tail resembled a fire python, giving it an extraordinary and mystical feel.

Lin Dong named the creature Little Flame. After a month of care, Little Flame had grown to an astonishing extent. By Lin Dong's estimations, Little Flame at this stage was probably evenly matched against a Tempered Body 5th Layer practitioner.

Little Flame's growth rate had exceeded Lin Zhentian and the rest's imagination. However, Lin Dong did not think that it was strange because he had been feeding the little fellow with the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid everyday. Sometimes, he even used the Ling Liquid to bathe it. If Lin Zhentian and the rest knew about the kind of treatment, they would probably vomit blood.

Little Flame allowed Lin Dong to gently and intimately cradle itself in his arms. After all, Lin Dong was the first person that it saw when it opened its eyes for the first time and after this one month of rearing, it had subconsciously regarded Lin Dong as its

closest kin.

When Demonic Beasts mature, they become fierce and vicious. However, if one trains them appropriately from when they are young, they would become a most loyal companion.

“You greedy little fellow!”

Seeing Little Flame acting coquettishly, Lin Dong helplessly shook his head. He removed a bottle from his clothes and tipped it over, dripping two drops of Stone Talisman Ling Liquid into Little Flame’s mouth.

After the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid entered its mouth, Little Flame stuck out its tongue in satisfaction and excitedly licked Lin Dong’s face.

“It’s time to head home. That’s all you are getting today.”

As he kept the bottle, Lin Dong grabbed Little Flame and placed it on his shoulder, before he immediately turned and swiftly ran out of the woods. Little Flame’s joyful little squeals rang throughout the forest.

...

The moon was like a silver plate that hung in the sky, enveloping the ground in cooling light.

Inside her room, Qing Tan lay quietly on her bed with a thin blanket that was unable conceal the curves of a young girl which had gradually grown bountiful and seductive.

Beside the soundly sleeping Qing Tan, a figure sat crosslegged on the ground. Upon closer inspection, one could see that person was Lin Dong. However, right now, he was in no mood to sleep, instead he had a solemn expression on his face as he utilized “QingYuan Arts” to continuously absorb the Yin Energy from Qing Tan’s body.

After he advanced to Earthly Yuan Stage, Lin Dong needed a vast amount of Yin Energy. However, he was not interested in the ordinary Yin Energy that existed between Heaven and Earth. Hence, he could only turn to Qing Tan.

After he discussed with Qing Tan, she finally nodded her head, rosy red with embarrassment. Since then, he would wait for Qing Tan to sleep every night before he sat beside her and trained for two hours.

During these two hours, Lin Dong could shamelessly absorb all the Yin Energy that he wanted from Qing Tan...

For the first one or two days, Qing Tan felt a little uncomfortable. After all, she was still a girl and it felt unnatural to be sleeping while a boy sat beside her. However, she had complete faith in Lin Dong. Nonetheless, if word of this matter got out, it would still affect her dignity as a girl.

After a few days, she gradually got used to the situation. In fact, she discovered that the Yin Energy within her body that flared up from time to time had tamed down. So, she was better able to enjoy her sleep.

With this benefit, Qing Tan decided not to resist anymore and grant this slightly overbearing request from Lin Dong...

“Huff...”

In that quiet room, Lin Dong deeply exhaled as he gently opened his tightly shut eyes. Feeling a faintly cold sensation emitted from his Dan Tian, he let out a gentle smile. He then very carefully leap off the bed and gazed at the young lady who was gently holding onto Little Flame as she slept.

The gentle moonlight poured in from the window and shined on the young girl's peaceful and beautiful face. It was truly an extremely moving sight.

After Lin Dong gently adjusted the blanket for Qing Tan, he silently left the room.

Just as Lin Dong exited the room, the smile on the young girl's face turned a little sweeter...

Chapter 52: Matters of the Family

“Ha!”

Within the spacious and empty woods, a figure moved like a fierce tiger. Two arms waved about and a deep blue Yuan Power surged, the traces of Yin Energy within caused the dried leaves on the ground to be covered in frost.

“Thump thump thump!”

The figure urgently stepped forward and a ferocious punch landed on the huge tree before him. A powerful force straightaway jolted the huge tree. It was immediately uprooted and flew through the air, causing the sky to be filled with dirt, before finally crashing onto the ground with a loud bang.

“Lin Dong-ge is the best!”

Nearby, a young lady's, who was clothed in light colored clothes, beautiful voice sounded out as she saw the huge tree fall to the ground.

Lin Dong chuckled and withdrew his fists. It had been one and a half months since the Hunting Competition. During this time, he had trained diligently and with the aid of the Stone Talisman Elixir Pills, he had successfully advanced from the Earthly Yuan Early Stage to the Middle Stage. Also, the Yuan Power in his Dan Tian had become increasingly vigorous and condensed due to absorbing the Yin Energy from Qing Tan's body.

Lin Dong guessed that even though he was currently at the Earthly Yuan Middle Stage, because of the assimilation of the Yin Energy, he would be able to fend off even a Earth Yuan Late Stage expert.

Furthermore, he had opened five channels during the half a month that he was learning “QingYuan Art”. Thus his efficiency of absorbing Yuan Power was several times better than before.

Overall, this past half a month of training was rather bountiful.

“Huu!”

Lin Dong grabbed a towel from one side and wiped off the sweat from his face. He then whistled towards the deep forest and almost immediately, a loud tiger hiss sounded back in reply. A few minutes later, a fiery-red shadow flew out of the forest and appeared before Lin Dong.

Naturally, this was Little Flame. In a short half a month, it’s body had once again grown to twice it’s size. When it stood up, it was even able to reach Lin Dong’s waist. Within its mouth, fangs had also begun to emerge. The current Little Flame was gradually developing the extraordinary air that a Fire Python Tiger possessed.

Some traces of an unknown beasts fur and blood could be seen in Little Flame’s mouth. After all, Little Flame was a Demonic Beast, thus it innately had the instincts of a wild beast and needed to eat

meat. Therefore, over this period of time, it would enter the deep forests by itself to prey on ferocious beasts.

With Little Flame's present capabilities, even if it encountered a Tempered Body 8th Layer practitioner or beast, it would be able to somehow deal with them. This kind of progress was not only due to the fact that it was a Demonic Beast, but more so because of Lin Dong's extremely luxuriant feeding habits.

"Little Flame, you're really naughty. Always appearing so dirty each time!" When Qing Tan saw Little Flame, she scolded it in a low voice before using a coarse cloth to wipe at the traces of blood at the corner of Little Flame's mouth.

To one side, Lin Dong laughed. He stroked Little Flame's head with his hand as he gazed at the latter's already considerably huge body. By right, Little Flame's rate of growth was really too quick. Even considering the aid from the Stone Talisman Ling Liquid, it should not have matured so quickly.

"Perhaps this was the reason why the Stone Talisman had a special reaction towards Little Flame. Little Flame and the other Fire Python Tigers are truly somewhat different..."

"Right. Lin Dong-ge, father has returned and is looking for you..." As Lin Dong was muttering to himself, Qing Tan suddenly interjected.

"Oh? Father is back again?"

Hearing these words, Lin Dong was slightly gladdened. He nodded in acknowledgement as he whistled, bringing Little Flame with him as he dashed off.

...

In the room, Lin Dong saw Lin Xiao who he had not met for half a month. The latter also saw him and a smile appeared on the father's originally somewhat haggard face. Lin Xiao gestured for Lin Dong to sit beside him and then sized up the latter for a moment before smiling: "How many channels have you unlocked in QingYuan Art?"

"Three." Lin Dong scratched his head while answering. Looks like Lin Xiao had learned from his past experiences and straightaway proceeded to ask about his son's progress. However, Lin Dong could not possibly tell his father that he had already unlocked five channels, else, it would be such a pain to explain again.

At Lin Dong's words, Lin Xiao laughed bitterly and sighed: "I was really asking for it..."

To think that he had spent a whole three months to unblock four channels and now Lin Dong had already opened three channels in a mere half a month. There was truly no point in comparing them at all.

"Heh heh." Lin Dong chuckled as he patted Little Flame's head. The latter obediently lay flat on its stomach besides Lin Dong. He

then looked towards his father and asked: “Father, what have you been busy with recently? The few times I visited the manor, I found that Grandfather and the rest did not look so good.”

Hearing Lin Dong speak of this matter, the smiling expression on Lin Xiao’s face weakened as he sighed before saying: “It’s the god damned Lei Family. Those honourless bastards.”

“Does it have to do with the Steel Wood Manor?” Lin Dong’s eyes flashed as he probed.

“Yes.” Lin Xiao nodded, a faint anger visible on his face as he replied: “Those bastards, they had originally agreed to hand it over in half a month. Yet, it has already been one and a half months and they have yet to deliver. Every time we send people to press them, they would intentionally avoid us.”

“The gamble that day was made before countless people. The Lei Family could not possibly dare to back out on their promise right?” Lin Dong frowned. If they really went back on the agreement, the reputation of the Lei Family would be destroyed. To them, this was no small matter.

“They never said they are backing out, they are just incessantly dragging it out.” Lin Xiao gritted his teeth and said. The Steel Wood produced by the Steel Wood Manor was a rather big business of the Lei Family. If their Lin Family managed to obtain it, then it would undoubtedly be a huge haul. But now, the fatty meat that was about to reach their mouth was being held back by the Lei Family. An action that left a bitter taste in anyone’s mouth.

“Then what does Grandfather and the rest plan to do?” Lin Dong asked.

“Your grandfather has already instructed me to bring men to the Steel Wood Manor tomorrow. If they are still not willing to hand it over, then we can only take it by force. Anyways, we are the one’s who have been wronged.” Lin Xiao replied.

At these words, Lin Dong heart slightly shivered. Looks like Grandfather and the rest did not intend to endure it any further. This time, no matter if they were successful or not, they would have declared war on the Lei Family. Thus, this operation was rather important to the Lin Family.

“Father, let me tag along tomorrow.” Lin Dong hesitated for a while before he suddenly asked.

“You’re just a child...embroiling yourself in these matters...” Lin Xiao was startled, but before he could finish his words, he suddenly remembered that Lin Dong was already at Earthly Yuan Stage. Even in the whole Lin Family, this was regarded as a somewhat major power. As such, he swallowed the words he had wanted to say and hesitated.

“Father, don’t worry. I will take care of myself. Furthermore, sooner or later, I will have to experience these kind of things. After all, I am a part of the Lin Family, even you cannot neglect a Earthly Yuan Power practitioner.” Lin Dong smiled as he reasoned.

Lin Xiao involuntarily let out a dry laugh as he gazed at Lin Dong. After muttering to himself for a while, he finally nodded with a smile: “Okay then, you will follow me tomorrow but don’t make any reckless moves. Instead, concentrate on taking care of yourself.”

“Yes! I will go make some preparations, tomorrow we will leave together!”

When he saw Lin Xiao nod in agreement, Lin Dong immediately burst out in joy before hastily standing up and dashing out of the room. Behind him, Little Flame also crawled up and nimbly followed.

Gazing at the backs of the human and tiger, Lin Xiao lightly smiled. Soon after, he withdrew his gaze as his smile turned icy-cold: “Lei Family, after suppressing my Lin Family for so many years, it’s finally time for payback!”

Chapter 53: Steel Wood Manor

The next day, about forty riders exited the main entrance of the Lin Family estate orderly. Seated on the horses were all experts from the Lin Family and the two riding majestically at the head of this procession were Lin Xiao and Lin Ken. For this mission, the Lin Family had sent out two Heavenly Yuan Stage practitioners. From this, one could see the importance of the operation.

Within the group of horses, a fiery-red shadow was extremely eye-catching. With an awe-inspiring aura, this was naturally Little Flame and at present, Lin Dong was seated on its back. The current physique of Little Flame was almost the same size as a normal tiger, more than enough to be ridden as a steed. And the strength of its legs and its speed was much better than a normal horse. After all, even though Little Flame was young, it was still a Demonic Beast.

“Since this little brat is also interested, you should bring him along too for experience and treat this as a practise. However, remember that nothing can happen to him or else the both of you can forget about returning to see me!” Just outside the entrance, Lin Zhentian first looked towards Lin Dong, who was saddled on the back of his tiger, before turning his gaze to Lin Xiao and Lin Ken as he sternly warned them.

“Fret not father.” Lin Ken smiled. With the protection of two Heavenly Yuan Stage expert, within fifty kilometer radius around QingYan Town, there was no one able to harm even a single hair on Lin Dong.

“Okay, remember to keep in constant contact and be careful. I will also pay attention to the Lei Family on this front.” Lin Zhentian nodded as he said in a low voice.

“Yes.” Lin Xiao and Lin Ken both acknowledged by nodding their heads and then took a headcount of their men. Without any more delays, they straightaway raised their horsewhips and turned to rush towards the outskirts of Qingyang Town.

“Little Flame, follow.”

Seeing that the operation had started, Lin Dong also lightly patted Little Flame. The latter let out a deep, low growl and stepped forward on all fours before speedily catching up to the group.

As this flashy mount travelled across Qingyang Town, it undoubtedly gave rise to disturbances. The gazes that looked towards the two were thick with envy.

...

Steel Wood Manor. A rather famous manor within the vicinity of Qingyang Town. Steel Wood was produced here in abundance and this type of Steel Wood was just like quality steel. It was resistant to both water and fire plus it was thick and strong, extremely suited for manufacturing weapons and construction purposes. Thus, this type of Steel Wood was relatively highly priced, combined with the fact that the Steel Wood Manor was the only source of Steel Wood within a 50 kilometer radius. Therefore, all

these years, the Lei Family had grown extremely rich from the Steel Wood Manor.

If the Lin Family managed to take over this Steel Wood Manor, their profits for the year would at least double. On the other hand, losing one Steel Wood Manor would cause some significant losses for the Lei Family.

It was half a day's journey to reach the Steel Wood Manor from Qingyang Town and after a whole morning of riding, Lin Xiao and the rest finally reached the edge of the Steel Wood Manor at noon.

...

From the back of the tiger, Lin Dong gazed down the slope. At the end of the road, an exceedingly vast manor stood. With just one look, it was impossible to see where the manor ended, however, into the distance, some huge black trees were vaguely discernable. These were the unique resource of the Steel Wood Manor, Steel Wood.

“The main entrance is tightly shut, looks like this will not go well...” Lin Ken squinted at the manor door that was closed securely as he said in an indifferent manner.

Lin Xiao lightly nodded in response before waving his hand. The Lin Family members behind him quickly went on alert. ‘Qiang qiang’ sounds could be heard as cold steel was drawn on horseback. With cold expressions, the atmosphere surged with killing intent.

At this sight, Lin Dong's fists involuntarily tightened up till his fingers turned a little white. This was the real world. All the fights he had experienced in the past was child's play compared to this genuine life or death situation. In this scene, there was no compromise with words, it was either your death or mine...

"Qin Ying, take two people and protect Dong-er, move!" Lin Xiao shouted in a low voice before drawing out his horsewhip and immediately dashing forward as yellow dirt rushed up to the skies.

"Da da!" (Clatter of horse hooves)

After Lin Xiao rushed forward, tens of trails of yellow dust also followed. In a few minutes, they appeared before the tightly shut manor door.

"Those arriving, halt. This is the Lei Family manor. Without permission, no one can enter!"

When Lin Xiao and the rest reached the entrance to the manor, several flashes of cold steel being drawn could be seen from the towering wall of the manor as a person shouted to Lin Xiao and the rest below.

"Let the person in charge here come out. Today, our Lin Family is here to take over the Steel Wood Manor!" Lin Xiao shouted in a low tone, using the vigorous Yuan Power to amplify his voice until it thundered across the whole manor.

“Heh, isn’t your Lin Family too impatient? If you want us to hand over the manor, first go to the Lei Family residence to complete the procedures before returning here.” On the manor wall, two figures suddenly appeared and a somewhat mocking voice sounded out.

“Lei Nuo and Lei Ying.”

Seeing the duo atop the manor wall, Lin Xiao’s and Lin Ken’s eyebrows slightly raised. These two were core members of the Lei Family and they were both at Heavenly Yuan Early Stage. Looks like the Lei Family was also on guard.

“Haha, Brother Lin Xiao and Brother Lin Ken, since our Lei Family has already said that we will hand the Steel Wood Manor over to your Lin Family, we would naturally do so. Why do all of you have to be so anxious? How about this, wait another five days and our Lei Family would officially hand over the Steel Wood Manor to you all, without any more delays. How does that sound?” From the top of the manor wall, a man in grey who had a somewhat long nose chuckled.

“Brother Lei Ying, you’ve already dragged this out for a month. Your words are hardly trustworthy now.” Lin Ken retorted.

“There seems to be some other motive behind this delay?” At the back of the group, after Lin Dong heard the Lei Family’s wrangling, his eyebrows involuntarily knitted together. He stared at Lei Ying and Lei Nuo and found that as the two were speaking, they could not help but glance towards the inside of the manor from the corners of their eyes.

“Uncle Qin Ying, there seems to be something amiss, come with me.”

Lin Dong’s eyes slightly flashed as he suddenly spoke to his guardian in a low voice.

“Young master Lin Dong...”

At these words, Qin Ying was stunned. Just as he intended to tell Lin Dong that it was better to just stay put, he cast a glance towards Little Flame and remembered that the youngster before him was no ignorant or naive child. After hesitating for a while, he waved his hand and stealthily beckoned his two other comrades to follow behind Lin Dong as they swiftly entered into the woods to one side.

“Uncle Qin Ying, do you know any other way to enter the Steel Wood Manor?” As they entered the forest, Lin Dong softly inquired.

“Yes, the Steel Wood Manor is too big, they could not possible fortify every part of it. According to my knowledge, there are quite a few spots where we can sneak in.” Qin Ying muttered in reply.

“Go, let us first enter the inner manor to scout around. Be prepared to signal my father and the rest at any time.” Lin Dong decisively instructed.

“This...alright.”

Hearing that Lin Dong actually intended to infiltrate the manor, Qin Ying was slightly shocked. However, when he thought about it, the two Heavenly Yuan Stage experts were currently both stuck at the manor entrance. With their party's current strength, defending themselves was not a problem. Furthermore, since they were so near to the main force, as long as they fired a signal, Lin Xiao and the rest could easily reinforce them. Thus Qin Ying nodded in agreement as he led the party onwards.

A party of four men and one beast rapidly travelled through the forest. A long while later, they successfully crossed over an unmanned part of the wall and leapt into the manor.

Inside the manor, everything looked to be quite peaceful. Lin Dong scanned the surroundings before silently running towards the area where the Steel Wood was planted.

The Steel Wood were all grown in a designated area of the Steel Wood Manor. However, when Lin Dong and his group sneaked into that area, they could not help but turn ashen-faced at the sight that was reflected in their eyes.

“These scumbags...”

As they gazed at the scene before their eyes, Qin Ying gnashed his teeth and cursed in rage from beside Lin Dong.

Chapter 54: Destruction

Before Lin Dong and the rest, what originally should be a populated Steel Wood growing district was now more than half empty. One after another, black wooden stumps protruded out of the ground. Numerous messy axe marks dotted what was left of a once magnificent tree. Clearly, this had been an extremely hasty job.

Of course, what caused Lin Dong and his party to be ashen faced was not the large portion of Steel Trees that had already been chopped down but the fact that there were currently many figures hurriedly pouring pots of stinky, poisonous liquid into the ground.

The Lei Family. Not only did they cut down most of the already growing Steel Trees, they still intended to ruin this plot of land, making it such that Steel Wood would never grow in this place again!

Harming others without benefit to oneself, this kind of act was incomparably despicable!

“These god damned bastards, they plan on leaving our Lin Family with a useless manor!” Qin Ying gnashed his teeth in anger as he cursed.

Lin Dong’s complexion turned somewhat gloomy. He did not foresee that the Lei Family would actually stoop so very low. If the land in the Steel Wood Manor was really made barren by the poison then this manor would become utterly worthless.

“What do we do now?” One of the Lin Family guards asked in a low voice. From the present situation, the Lei Family had yet to chop down and transport all of the Steel Wood. After all, the Steel Wood in the Steel Wood Manor was in extreme abundance, furthermore, Steel Trees were rather solid and thus not easy to cut down. Therefore, the Lei Family was still unable to completely clear out the Steel Wood Manor even after more than a month.

“Even without the Steel Wood, the trees can still be grown again. However, if the land is ruined, this Steel Wood Manor would be no different from a wasteland.” Qin Ying growled.

“Yes.”

Lin Dong lightly nodded in return. His gaze swept across the area, finding that most of the people were labourers hired by the Lei Family and of little threat to their party. Thus his eyes continued to scan about before finally stopping at some figures at the fringe of the crowd. These were the Lei Family guards.

“There are thirty guards from the Lei Family, out of which two are at the Earthly Yuan Stage. I recognize the leader, he is called Dai En, an ex-bandit. It was only later that he became a Lei Family guard. His strength is probably equivalent to mine, about that of an Earthly Yuan Early Stage practitioner. The other one should also be at this level.” Qin Ying furrowed his eyebrows as he quietly informed the rest. In their party, only Lin Dong and him were at the Earth Yuan Stage. However, it was also the first time that Lin Dong had encountered this type of situation. If they really went at it with their lives on the line, it would be very difficult to contend

against the other party's Earthly Yuan experts.

“Two at Earthly Yuan Early Stage.” Lin Dong's eyes flashed as he muttered: “Uncle Qin Ying, release the signal to notify my father and the rest.”

“Once we fire the signal, they will discover our presence. Shall we withdraw first?” Qin Ying was alarmed. The opponent had two Earthly Yuan Stage experts plus more than ten experienced practitioners. On their side, it was just the four of them. If they retreated, Qin Ying could still protect Lin Dong. However, if they directly engaged the enemy, he definitely be tight pressed to ensure his own survival, let alone Lin Dong's.

“There's no time to retreat. For every bit of poison they scatter, the output of the Steel Wood Manor would drop by a portion.” Lin Dong shook his head before continuing: “When we make our move, leave Dai En and the other one to me. You and your men will stop the rest of them.”

At these words, Qin Ying's expression changed. Did Lin Dong think that he could face two Earthly Yuan Early Stage experts by himself?

“Don't tarry any longer, I am not so foolish as to court a certain death.”

Lin Dong quickly pacified Qin Ying and the rest as if he knew what they were thinking, he did not have the time to explain further. He had already reached Earthly Yuan Middle Stage.

Furthermore, with the huge amount of Yin Energy he had absorbed from Qing Tan, the fused Yuan Power he possessed was much stronger than a normal practitioner. Although he lacked the experience his opponents had, with two Level 4 Martial Arts in his arsenal, facing the two of them would not be much of an issue.

Seeing Lin Dong persist and then once again considering the current situation, Qin Ying clenched his jaw before retrieving a signal flare and igniting it. A bright red light soared into the sky and exploded. In a radius of one kilometer, a harsh red glare could be clearly seen.

“Who?!”

In the instance when the signal was fired, the Lei Family guards nearby also became aware of their presence. The leader was a man with a dark expression. He abruptly turned as he fiercely stared at where Lin Dong and gang were hiding. With a wave of his hand, over ten figures who were scattered around slowly encircled the spot and closed in.

“Roar!”

Just as they were closing in, a tiger roar suddenly sounded out and a fiery-red shadow burst forth.

“Fire Python Tiger!”

The Lei Family guards evidently had some discerning eyes among

them as they recognized Little Flame instantly. Terrified yells rang out and some of the more timid ones were so taken aback that they pissed in their pants.

“Don’t panic, it’s just a young Fire Python Tiger!” The man known as Dai En was also initially shocked, however he quickly noticed that Little Flame was still young and sternly shouted to his men.

“6th brother, you’re with me. Let’s slaughter this brute together. The rest of you go and catch the other intruders! I would love find out exactly which god damned bastards actually dared cause trouble in the Steel Wood Manor!”

Dai En obviously held a lot of sway among the guards. After he shouted out his commands, the terror in the guards weakened and the other Earthly Yuan Stage expert came to stand beside Dai En while wearing a dark and fierce expression.

“Go!”

The two exchanged a glance and dashed straight at Little Flame in unison. However, when the two were still several meters from closing in on Little Flame, a figure abruptly rushed out from its rear and appeared before the two. A ferocious Yuan Power suffused with an ice-cold chill ruthlessly attacked the two.

“Careful!”

The sudden attack caused Dai En and his partner to be alarmed, but soon after, Yuan Power also gushed out from their own bodies.

“Bang!”

The three figures crashed heavily together. A strong force erupted from the clash, causing the rubble on the ground to be swept into the air. The figure which had appeared from Little Flame’s back had his body slightly jolted back but he quickly steadied himself. By contrast, Dai En and his partner were pushed back several steps under the astonished gazes of everyone else.

“Ss!”

Qin Ying and the rest who were originally preparing to reinforce Lin Dong at any time involuntarily gasped as they saw this scene. With startled gazes, they stared at the back of the youngster. They never imagined that Lin Dong was able to come out on top even when it was one against two!

“Worthy of being called the Lin Family’s most talented individual.”

Even a notable man like Qin Ying who constantly faced life or death battles felt a sense of admiration bubble up in his heart when he looked at the youngster’s back. At this moment, he had already forgotten the age gap between the two of them. After all, the only thing worth respecting in this land was power.

“Attack!”

Qin Ying quickly commanded after seeing that Lin Dong was able to stop Dai En and his partner. The party rushed towards the ten or so Lei Family Guards who had surrounded them. With his Earthly Yuan Stage strength, even if they were less in number, Qin Ying was not worried at all.

“Roar!”

At the same time, Little Flame once again bellowed as it turned into a fiery shadow and blazed out of the encirclement, directly heading towards the labourers who were still scattering poison about. In response to this devilish looking monster, the labourers hastily threw away the buckets in their hands and fled for their lives.

“It’s the Lin Family!” When Dai En saw Qin Ying rushing out his expression slightly changed. An ominous glint flashed across his eyes as he gave a death stare to Lin Dong.

“6th brother, let’s strike together and kill this brat!”

Dai En licked his lips, a murderous intent spilling from his face. Hearing his words, the Earthly Yuan Stage expert Dai En had called 6th brother also nodded with a dark expression. The two split to the left and right as if they were savage wolves that had practised this routine countless times before. Step by step, they crept towards Lin Dong.

Gazing at the two who had surrounded him and were steadily approaching, Lin Dong took in a deep breath. This was the first life or death battle in his life.

Chapter 55: A Death Match

With ominous glints in their eyes, Dai En and his partner slowly approached Lin Dong.

“Bang!”

Every step brought them closer and closer to their target. In the next instance, the two of them practically burst forward simultaneously, with vigorous Yuan Power gathering at the center of their palms. With a force powerful enough to split boulders, two palms, one from the left, the other from the right, chopped towards Lin Dong’s head.

When the two of them made their move, they revealed their almost perfect coordination. This incoming offensive from both left and right was rather hard for one to deal with simultaneously.

Lin Dong concentrated as he gazed at the two who were attacking him, a rare franticness in his heart that was still within his expectations. His left hand formed into a fist while his right took the shape of a palm. Penetrating Fist and Eight Desolations Palm were once again executed at the same time.

“Thud thud!”

When fist and palm collided, a deep, muffled noise sounded out from the three’s hands. In that instance where they briefly contacted, the originally malicious look on Dai En and his partner slightly changed. The huge force from their opponent’s fist and

palm had jolted them to the bone, causing it to ache faintly. However, what astonished them the most was the opposing party's Yuan Power. It seemed to contain a type of exceedingly icy-cold chill which caused waves of stabbing pain to transmit from their skin when they came into contact with it.

“Go all out, leave no mercy!”

From this exchange, Dai En and his partner were able to perceive that Lin Dong's strength was unexpectedly one tier above their own. However, perhaps due to his tender age, Lin Dong still seemed a little rough around the edges in this life or death battle.

“Wind Splitting Claw!”

“Hidden Gentle Palm!”

The duo's martial arts styles changed in a flash, as a violent claw and gentle palm immediately closed in on Lin Dong. Both were vicious moves that strived to hit a vital point completely without even the slightest shred of mercy.

Faced with such a ruthless attacks, Lin Dong was initially slightly flustered. However, this state did not last long as he gradually steeled himself and his defensive posture started to improve. Relying on the vigorous Yuan Power within his body, together with his mastery of martial arts, Lin Dong gradually gained the upper hand as he shifted from defense to offense. In response, Dai En and his partner had no choice but to continuously retreat.

In a short ten rounds, Lin Dong's offense gradually shed its rough edges and sometimes, his strikes were even imbued with a trace of ferociousness, causing the two of them to fall into a somewhat difficult situation.

“Damn, there's something strange about this brat!”

Faced with Lin Dong's increasingly proficient attacks, Dai En's and his 6th brother's expressions turned somewhat pained. During this battle, they could feel that the other party was evolving at an exceedingly fast pace; it was as if they were the whetstone to sharpen his blade.

“Leave!”

After another short bout, Dai En and his partner realized that they were both dropping to a more and more disadvantageous position. With a decisive shout, they both suddenly retreated.

After he saw the two of them retreat, Lin Dong's eyes flashed as he abruptly dashed forward two steps. As he curled two fingers on each hand, he rapidly stabbed towards their chests.

Lin Dong's finger strike was extremely quick and violent. Under Dai En and his partner's frightened gazes, deep blue Yuan Power concentrated at his fingertips before finally piercing at the their arms which had been brought up to block their chest areas.

“Bang!”

A deep and low sound rang out when finger contacted arm. Dai En and his partner both flew backwards and on each of their arms, a bloody hole appeared while fresh blood gushed out.

To one side, Qin Ying who was currently taking care of the other Lei Family Guards, also turned his head when he heard the noise. His mouth twitched upon seeing the two of them falling to the ground, with blood all over their arms.

“For him to be able to singlehandedly defeat two veteran Earthly Yuan Early Stage experts, I’m pretty sure that young master Lin Dong’s strength has already reached Earthly Yuan Middle Stage...”

At this point, Qin Ying could not help but sigh. This level of talent truly caused one to feel somewhat powerless.

“Dai En and his partner have fallen, do you still dare to resist like cornered rats?”

Sighing in his heart, Qin Ying quickly recovered his wits and shouted as he stared at the Lei Family guards who continued to resist.

After they heard him shout, the Lei Family guard’s faces changed as their footsteps slowed down.

“Dammit, where did those dogs come from? To think that they actually dared to stir up trouble in our Steel Wood Manor, do they

want to die so badly?” However, just as these guards slowed down, a thunderous bellow suddenly sounded out from a distance. In an instant, a figure that looked as sturdy as a black tower swiftly approached.

“Lei Shan!”

When he saw the black tower-like figure, Qin Ying’s complexion abruptly turned 180 degrees, while looks of ecstasy appeared on the Lei Family guard’s faces.

“Young master Lin Dong, quickly fall back. This Lei Shan is an Earthly Yuan Late Stage expert!” In one leap, Qin Ying appeared besides Lin Dong and warned him in a low voice.

“It’s too late.”

Lin Dong shook his head in response. Although the black tower-like figure was quite bulky, his speed was not slow. In a mere ten seconds, he had appeared within ten meters of Lin Dong and the rest. Forcefully stepping off the ground, the figure burst forward as a vigorous Yuan Power hurriedly gathered at his right leg. That arrogant and oppressive force caused Qin Ying’s face to pale.

“Young master Lin Dong, let’s go!”

Qin Ying grabbed Lin Dong’s arm. Just as the former intended to forcefully drag away the latter, he was immediately repelled away by Lin Dong.

Pushing Qin Ying away, Lin Dong tightly stared at iron tower-like figure with a fire burning in his eyes. At the same time, his hands rapidly formed into a series of complicated seals.

“You little bastard, let Daddy stomp you into meat paste!”

The black tower-like figure gazed at Lin Dong, who unexpectedly did not even bother dodging. A malicious smile involuntarily formed on his face as the Yuan Power undulating on his right leg became more and more concentrated.

Lin Dong’s expression was serene. As the speed at which the seals changed became faster and faster, within his Dan Tian, a deep blue Yuan Power also gushed out at lightning speed, before condensing at the center of his palm.

“Die!”

Just when Lin Dong’s seals stopped changing, the sturdy shadow was already right before him. A violent kick ruthlessly smashed towards Lin Dong’s head.

“Bang!”

As the leg smashed downwards, a deep blue light also burst out from Lin Dong’s palm. The bone-chilling chill exploded forth and the light took the shape of a seal before ferociously colliding with menacing kick.

A loud and low sound reverberated in the air and Lin Dong was jolted until both his legs sunk half a meter into the ground. However, the sturdy figure was also thrown backwards, and even stumbled a little before falling to the ground. He gazed at the youngster's figure with complete disbelief, evidently unable to imagine that this opponent had actually received his attack head on!

“You are that brat from the Lin Family?!”

Shocked, Lei Shan suddenly shouted as he stared at Lin Dong.

Lin Dong's hesitated to find the right words. At this moment, his entire arm was numb. That guy was undoubtedly an Earthly Yuan Late Stage expert.

“This brat is indeed not an ordinary character.”

As Lei Shan stared at Lin Dong, his expression suddenly turned sinister. The more talented Lin Dong was, the greater the threat he posed to their Lei Family.

Lei Shan's mind screamed murder as his foot once again stepped off the ground. Like a raging bull, he charged towards Lin Dong as Yuan Power bubbled up on Lei Shan's fists. It looks like he was really intending to finish Lin Dong off this time.

“Get lost!”

As Lin Dong gazed at Lei Shan, who was charging at him once again, his expression also darkened slightly. However, just as he prepared to dodge the incoming attack, an icy shout suddenly sounded out.

Just as the shout faded, a familiar figure appeared in front of Lin Dong. With a simple punch, the bull-like Lei Shan was heavily smashed back with his body dragging against the ground while he flew backwards.

Chapter 56: Yang Energy in the Earth

“Father!”

As he saw the figure that appeared in front of him, Lin Dong's mood turned slightly joyful and he immediately greeted his father.

“You cheeky fellow. I told you to just stay back and observe. How dare you barge into the manor on your own!” Naturally, the one who had appeared in front of Lin Dong, was Lin Xiao, who had immediately rushed over after he saw the signal. At this moment, he had turned his head and was furiously scolding Lin Dong.

“Third Master, please do not blame young master Lin Dong. If he did not lead us into the manor, I am afraid that this Steel Wood Manor would have been completely devastated by the Lei Family.” Qin Ying, who was standing to one side, hurriedly walked over as he pointed at the wrecked forest grounds and explained.

Upon hearing these words, Lin Xiao was instantly shocked. As he turned his head towards the direction that Qin Ying was pointing, he saw a black forested which was filled with a nasty smell. Immediately, his facial expression turned extremely ugly.

“Lin Xiao, though we've lost this Steel Wood Manor to your family, before we officially hand it over, this place still belongs to the Lei Family. To actually dare and invade this place, have you no respect for our Lei Family!”

Just as Lin Xiao's facial expression turned ugly, an angry shout

sounded out from nearby. Following which the Lei Ying duo, leading about ten men, rushed over.

“Humph, if I had not barged in, the Lei Family would have completely destroyed the entire Steel Wood Manor!” Lin Xiao icily laughed as he darkly stared at Lei Ying and the rest.

Upon hearing these words, Lei Ying’s and Lei Ruo’s facial expressions changed. As they stared at the area around the Steel Wood forest district, they furrowed their eyebrows while secretly cursing in their hearts.

“Third Brother, what is going on?”

Right at this moment, Lin Ken also rushed in together with a few skilled practitioners from the Lin Family. Upon witnessing this standoff, he softly asked Lin Xiao.

Lin Xiao briefly explained the events. When Lin Ken heard that the Lei Family were so despicable that they were planning to destroy even the soil from the Steel Wood Manor, though he was usually a calm person, rage instantly filled his heart. After all, this was truly a low blow.

“The Lei Family is truly remarkable. After stalling for so long, you actually plan to completely uproot this area and destroy the land!” Lin Ken coldly stared at Lei Ying and the rest as he icily said.

To one side, the skilled practitioners from Lin Family were now

tightly gripping onto the blades and sabers in their hands with steely expressions. They evidently sensed that a huge battle could break out at anytime.

After their ploy was uncovered, the expression on Lei Ying and the rest's faces turned distorted. They decided not to conceal the truth anymore and Lei Ying replied in an indifferent manner: "The Steel Wood Manor is the fruits of our Lei Family's labour. Why should we serve it up to the Lin Family on a silver platter."

Upon hearing these words, Lin Ken and the rest grew even more enraged.

"The Lei Family's character is truly admirable. From now on, this Steel Wood Manor belongs to our Lin Family. If there are any objections, you can raise it up with me!" Lin Xiao threatened as a cold light flashed in his eyes.

"How dare you!"

At these words, Lei Ying's and the rest's faces twitched. However, when they remembered that Lin Xiao had reached Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage, they could only choke back their anger. After all, if they fought now, they will definitely get the shorter end of the stick.

"Heh, since the Lin Family is so obsessed over this Steel Wood Manor, we shall give it to you. However, please take good care of it. In the end, all of this will eventually return to our Lei Family."

Lei Ying stared menacingly at Lin Xiao and the rest before he icily chuckled. Without further ado, he immediately waved his hand and departed with the rest of his crew.

As they looked at Lei Ying and the rest's backs, Lin Xiao and his group's facial expressions hardly improved. After all, with all the damage inflicted on the Steel Wood Manor, the output of Steel Wood had definitely dropped substantially.

"Those god damned bastards!" Lin Ken's face turned red as he cursed them in a low voice.

Lin Xiao also released a soft sigh as he said: "Let's inspect the Steel Tree forest area around the Steel Wood Manor and check the extent of the damage."

"Yes!"

After hearing his words, the guards from Lin Family spread out rapidly and entered the Steel Wood forested grounds.

After approximately half an hour of inspection, they returned to report their finding. Though their reports only made Lin Ken's and Lin Xiao's facial expression worsen.

Standing beside them, Lin Dong also furrowed his eyebrows. There were still several full-grown steel wood trees remaining in this area. However, the biggest loss was that the Lei Family had completely poisoned the soil. Therefore, even if they could still

plant steel wood trees in the future, the overall harvest would drop tremendously.

“Sigh, let’s inform Father regarding this matter. The old man really valued this Steel Wood Manor. Once he knows about this matter, he will definitely be pissed off.” Lin Xiao sighed as he told Lin Ken.

“Yes.”

Lin Ken gave a pained smile as he nodded. Right now, this was all that they could do.

As he stared at their expressions which were twisted with rage and disappointment, Lin Dong also sighed inwardly. This ploy by the Lei Family was truly vicious.

...

Once news of this matter reached the Lin Family, in just half a day, Lin Zhentian led a group of men to personally inspect the Steel Wood Manor. As he gazed at the rotten and foul-smelling forested grounds, his facial expression turned horrendously dark.

Lin Dong sat on a cliff and looked down upon a large hall. From that hall, Lin Zhentian’s angry roars could be clearly heard. Even though Lin Dong was not seated within the hall, he could not help but shiver a little. After all, this was the first time he had seen Lin Zhentian so furious. Seems like the Lei Family had really crossed

the line this time.

“How frightening.”

Seated beside him, Qing Tan licked her lips as she softly muttered. This time, she had tagged along with Lin Zhentian and the rest.

Lin Dong forced out a chuckle before he stood up and said: “Let’s go walk around. I believe Grandpa’s anger will not simmer down any time soon, it would be better to let Father and the rest handle this.”

“Ok.” Qing Tan nodded her head as she cheekily smiled.

Lin Dong let Qing Tan sit on Little Flame as he led the way into the deeper part of the Steel Wood Manor.

The Steel Wood Manor occupied a huge piece of land and its surroundings were extremely beautiful. If it was not for the faint putrid smell from all around, it would be an exceedingly wonderful summer vacation house.

“Steel Wood Manor has a special dark soil that is necessary to plant Steel Trees. It is said that a long time ago, the area where the Steel Wood Manor is presently located, was a volcano and all the dark soil came from when the volcano erupted. Now that the volcano has vanished, the dark soil is a limited commodity. Since the Lei Family has wrecked large patches of soil, I am afraid that

the Steel Wood output will fall drastically in future. That's why Grandpa is so angry." In the serene woods, Lin Dong casually explained to the young lady beside him.

"Oh." Qing Tan gently nodded her head as she looked around and said : "The temperature here is higher than outside."

"Oh?"

After hearing these words, Lin Dong was taken aback. Though he tried to sense it, he realized that he was unable to feel the heat. In a flash of inspiration, he suddenly recalled that due to the terrifying Chilling Cold in Qing Tan's body, she was extremely sensitive to the temperature of her surroundings.

"This moisture content here is rather high, how can it feel warmer?" Just as he figured out the previous question, Lin Dong was again puzzled as he softly muttered to himself. He squatted down and grabbed a handful of black soil with his right hand. Just as his hand touched the black soil, his body suddenly jerked as delight surfaced in his eyes.

"There is a trace of Yang Energy hidden within the land here!"

When Lin Dong grabbed the dark soil, he could vividly feel a suction force emitting from the Stone Talisman embedded within his right palm. Due to this suction force, a faint stream of air was sucked out from the dark soil. Even though it was only a tiny amount, the air felt burning hot like sunlight. This was something that was completely different from Yin Energy!

This type of thing was commonly known as Yang Energy and it was absorbed by all Heavenly Yuan practitioners!

“How can this be?”

Lin Dong was puzzled. As there was only a faint amount of Yang Energy contained within, if he did possess the Stone Talisman, he would have never discovered it. Nonetheless, it definitely existed.

Lin Dong lifted his head and looked further into the depths of this place as his eyebrows tightly knit together. He immediately took a few hundred steps forwards and he grabbed another pile of dark soil.

“As I progress deeper, the Yang Energy in the dark soil gets stronger.” After he noticed this change, Lin Dong was even more puzzled. Even though the amount of Yang Energy was rather pathetic, why would there be Yang Energy embedded in this soil in the first place?

“Unless... Below the surface, there is something emitting Yang Energy. Therefore, traces of Yang Energy were mixed into the soil...”

Lin Dong’s eyes flashed as he involuntarily prodded the ground below him. Seems like there was a hidden mystery in this Steel Wood Manor.

Chapter 57: Yang Yuan Stone

“Lin Dong-ge, did something happen?”

Seated on Little Flame, Qing Tan inquisitively asked after she saw Lin Dong’s peculiar actions.

Lin Dong waved his hands and did not reply. He lifted his head and somberly surveyed the surrounding before he grabbed soil from north, south, east and west directions in order to test the concentration of Yang Energy contained within the soil.

“The soil to the north seems to contain more Yang Energy.”

Lin Dong dusted off the black soil on his hands and beckoned to Qing Tan before immediately dashing towards the north. Behind him, Qing Tan immediately urged Little Flame to follow.

Human and beast sprinted through the lush forest as softs ray of light penetrated through the tree leaves and illuminated the woods.

Most of the land in the Steel Wood Manor was made up of virgin forests. Upon cursory inspection, it seemed that the Lei Family had concentrated their efforts on the Steel Wood. Therefore, they did not bother exploring the other parts of the forest.

After running a short distance, Lin Dong would bend down to grab some soil in order to discern the direction before once again

heading off.

This search lasted for approximately half an hour before Lin Dong finally stopped. The soil here was extremely dark in color, and when Lin Dong grabbed the soil, he could vividly feel that the Yang Energy contained within was more highly concentrated than anywhere else.

“Lin Dong-ge, this place is scorching!”

Seated on Little Flame’s back, Qing Tan’s exquisite face was now drenched with sweat. Since she arrived here, she felt as though she had entered a furnace. If Lin Dong had not insisted, she would have left immediately.

“Just endure it for a while.”

Lin Dong smiled as he tried to pacify her. He gazed around and discovered that they had nearly reached the end of the woodlands. He could also faintly smell some traces of wild beasts. Instantly, he went on guard while signalling to Qing Tan before he crouched down and slowly walked forward. Moments later, a valley appeared in front of his eyes.

As Lin Dong carefully scanned the valley, his eyes quickly concentrated on the two black figures that were hidden deep within the valley.

These two figures seemed to be two black Panthers. Their entire

bodies were pitch-black and it looked like they were wearing a suit of black armour that completely covered every bit of their bodies. When the sun shone on them, a glaring light was reflected off and their verdant eyes revealed a savage and cunning temperament.

“Demonic Black Steel Panther.”

As he looked at those two black metal-like Panthers, Lin Dong involuntarily gasped. These two Demonic Black Steel Panthers were Demonic Beasts and they were equally fearsome as the Fire Python Tiger. A matured Demonic Panther likewise possess the same might as a Heavenly Yuan practitioner. Currently, from their sizes, it was clear that these two creatures were in their prime.

Therefore, these two creatures were the equivalent of two Heavenly Yuan experts. Lin Dong never expected that such deadly creatures were hidden in the depths of the Steel Wood Manor.

“It’s no wonder that the people from the Lei Family did not dare to venture this deep into the woods. It turns out that there was this kind of danger lurking about.” Lin Dong muttered to himself. Just as he planned to silently retreat, a mysterious undulation was suddenly emitted by his right palm that had been placed on the ground.

This undulation shocked Lin Dong. Soon after, he carefully bent down on all fours. If the Stone Talisman vibrated, something must have attracted its attention.

Lin Dong placed his right palm flat on the ground as he quietly

felt the undulation. Meanwhile, he slowly moved his body in response. It was a long while later before he finally stopped at a slight depression in the ground.

As he stared at this slight depression, Lin Dong was somewhat puzzled. Soon after, his fist ferociously slammed down. Soil immediately flew in every direction and a inch wide hole was revealed. It was evident that this hole existed long ago, however it was covered by a layer of soil on the surface.

Just as this hole emerged, the undulations from Lin Dong's right palm intensified. After some hesitation, he decided to stretch his hand into that hole and randomly fished about.

Seated nearby, Qing Tan looked at Lin Dong, who was now kneeling on the floor and digging rocks and soil out of the hole like a pangolin. An odd expression surfaced on her tiny face as she was evidently uncertain of what Lin Dong was up to.

Under Qing Tan's strange gaze, Lin Dong's continued to dig around in that hole for half a day. However, all he managed to uncover were some stray pebbles, and he found nothing of interest.

After he dug for a while more, he still did not uncover any treasure. Just as he was so frustrated that he was ready to call it quits, his hand suddenly grabbed onto a warm stone in the hole, and when he clenched the stone in his palm, the undulation of the Stone Talisman finally stopped.

“Found it...”

As he sensed the change in the Stone Talisman, Lin Dong was delighted. He immediately pulled out his arm as a light red rock appeared before his eyes.

That stone did not have defined edges, and was coloured a light-red. It was also translucent like a crystal. Holding the stone in his hand, he could feel a faint warmth, as if he were holding onto a ball of sunlight.

“This is... a Yang Yuan Stone...”

Lin Dong was lost in a daze as he stared at the light-red crystal-rock in his hand. Suddenly, he took in a deep breath and a look of awe surfaced in his eyes.

Yang Yuan Stone was a rather special crystal stone. It was said that it could only be formed in the deepest parts of a volcano. Not only did the crystal stone absorbed the Yuan Energy between Heaven and Earth, but after bathing in lava in a long time, they also managed to assimilate a part of the Yang Energy from the lava. This Yang Energy, was akin to the life blood for Heavenly Yuan practitioners.

Lin Dong had once heard from Lin Xiao that in the Great Yan Dynasty, many Heavenly Yuan Practitioners would carry around a few Yang Yuan Stones. However, these items were not cheap, therefore, they were rarely seen in Qingyang Town.

Lin Dong had never expected that he would actually uncover a Yang Yuan Stone. After all, it was rare for Yang Yuan Stone to appear by itself. Due to the special circumstances needed for its formation, anywhere a Yang Yuan Stone appears, there would tend to be a lode nearby. This lode could be small or large, however, even if it were an extremely tiny lode, it would still be considered as a massive fortune for the Lin Family.

“This place used to be a volcano. Therefore, it is not impossible for a Yang Yuan Stone lode to exist here...”

Lin Dong’s mouth could not help but twitch in excitement. He tightly gripped the Yang Yuan Stone in his hand and abruptly stood up.

“Growl!”

Just as he stood up, in the valley ahead, the two Demonic Black Steel Panthers suddenly growled. Their growls seems to be directed towards his location.

“We have been discovered...”

Lin Dong’s facial expression changed as he rapidly dashed back and leapt on Little Flame’s back. Then, he held onto Qing Tan’s slim waist and shouted: “Quick! Let’s go!”

At his shout, Little Flame let out a tiny grow before it immediately stretched out its four limbs and dashed out of the

forest like a whirlwind...

...

“Sigh, let’s first gather some workers to be stationed at this Steel Wood Manor and try to clear up the poison within the soil. As for the rest of the Steel Wood, lets cut it down first before testing if this area is still suitable for planting Steel Wood. If it’s impossible, lets not waste too much manpower here.” In the hall, after an afternoon of howling, Lin Zhentian finally stopped his pointless rage as he sat on his chair and solemnly commanded.

“Yes.”

Upon hearing these words, Lin Xiao and the rest forced a smile as they nodded their heads. They were evidently disappointed. Initially, what they thought would be a huge score turned out to be a dud.

“Bang!”

When Lin Xiao and the rest were nodding their heads, the door to the hall was suddenly slammed open as Lin Dong immediately barged in. After seeing his dirty appearance and flustered expression, everyone was shocked. Just as they were about to comment, Lin Dong took out a light-red crystal rock and heavily placed it on the table in front of Lin Zhentian.

“Grandpa. This time, our Lin Family has struck gold!”

Chapter 58: Lode

“Yang Yuan Stone?!”

As he stared at the light-red crystal stone that Lin Dong had placed in front of him, Lin Zhentian was slightly taken aback. Soon after, he also fished out a red crystal stone from his clothes and realized that it was identical to Lin Dong's.

“Haha, you little chap. You are indeed lucky...” Lin Zhentian chuckled as he grabbed a tea cup nearby and took a sip before continuing: “Pass this Yang Yuan Stone to your Father. It just happens that he has need for it.”

“Grandpa, this was dug out from a deep part of the Steel Wood Manor. There is probably a Yang Yuan Stone lode hidden there!” Lin Dong's face turned slightly flustered.

“Spit!”

Just as Lin Dong finished, Lin Zhentian immediately spat out the tea in his mouth. He quickly stood up as he looked at Lin Dong with blood-red eyes, trembling as he spoke: “What did you just say? Yang Yuan Stone lode?!”

Standing in the giant hall, Lin Xiao and Lin Ken were also shocked after hearing Lin Dong's words. They clearly knew how important and valuable these Yang Yuan Stones were. For Heavenly Yuan Stage practitioners, it was an irresistible item. If they were able to open up this lode, it would definitely be an

exceedingly huge treasure trove. Compared to that, the Steel Wood business had become second tier.

Even the Lei Family who had been here for several years could never have imagined that hidden beneath this Steel Wood Manor, lay such an enormous treasure!

Of course, if they knew about it, even if someone were to tempt them with ten Fire Python Tiger Cubs, they would never even consider using this Steel Wood Manor as a wager.

Lin Dong nodded. Pointing at the light-red crystal rock, he said: "I dug this out from that place. Grandpa, all of you should know that this kind of Yang Yuan Stone seldom appears alone..."

"Huu..."

Lin Xiao and Lin Kin breathed out deeply as they exchanged a look. Moments later, both of them hoarsely said: "The Steel Wood Manor used to be a volcanic region long ago. Hence, it possess the necessary conditions to create Yang Yuan Stones. It is not impossible for there to be a Yang Yuan Stone lode nearby."

"Take me to the place!"

Lin Zhentian's breathing sounded hurried as he paced around the giant hall before he urgently commanded.

Lin Dong nodded and replied: "However, there are two Demonic

Black Steel Panthers there.”

“Oh?”

After hearing about the two Demonic Black Steel Panthers, Lin Zhentian’s facial expression changed. Promptly, he gritted his teeth and said: “It doesn’t matter. If there is a Yang Yuan Stone lode there, let alone two Demonic Black Steel Panthers, even if there were more, we will utilize any means to get rid of them!”

Upon hearing these words, Lin Dong nodded his head again. Without further ado, he turned and left the giant hall. He summoned Little Flame and mounted it as he swiftly led the trio of Lin Zhentian, Lin Xiao and Lin Ken back towards the deep forest grounds.

...

They travelled at full speed and in approximately ten minutes, they managed to arrive at the place where Lin Dong had discovered the Yang Yuan Stone.

“It is indeed a Demonic Black Steel Panther.”

As he stood at the top of the valley, Lin Zhentian looked at the two Demonic Black Steel Panthers below as he solemnly nodded his head. These two creatures were after all as powerful as a Heavenly Yuan expert. It was going to be troublesome to get rid of them.

Lin Zhentian muttered to himself before he turned around. Behind him, Lin Xiao and Lin Ken were hurriedly using shovels to dig around the hole where Lin Dong uncovered the Yang Yuan Stone. This matter was too important and it would be unwise to get ordinary folk to help out. Therefore, the two of them could only personally undertake this task.

To one side, Lin Dong involuntarily chuckled after he saw Lin Xiao and Lin Ken digging like laborers.

Lin Xiao and Lin Ken did not have to time to bother with Lin Dong. The two of them were concentrating on swinging their shovels as they ruthlessly increased the size of the hole.

Thanks to the efforts by these two Heavenly Yuan Stage experts, in approximately half an hour, the small hole that was only inches in depth became a large hole several meters wide. However, what puzzled Lin Dong was, even after they dug such a deep hole, they did not find any other Yang Yuan Stones. However, the vibration from the Stone Talisman embedded in his palm clearly hinted to him that there was something hidden below.

The sun gradually set down, sinking below the flat horizon as the gently glowing moon rose in its place. Very soon, the light rays that illuminated the land turned dimmer.

“Father, this time, I am afraid that Dong-er just got lucky...”

Inside the deep hole, Lin Xiao wiped his sweat as he lifted his

head and looked at the tensed up Lin Zhentian, a forced smile on the former's face.

At these words, Lin Zhentian also sighed as disappointment filled his eyes. It seems like he was overly optimistic. After all, it was not so easy to discover a Yang Yuan Stone lode.

“Let's call it a day, it's getting late...” Lin Zhentian waved his hands as a beaten look filled his face.

The two in the deep hole, Lin Xiao and Lin Ken also shook their heads with a pained smile. Things sure didn't go their way today. First, they received a rotten Steel Wood Manor and now they acted as laborers here for almost a whole day...

As he saw their disappointed faces, Lin Dong's eyebrows knitted even more tightly together. He immediately lept into the giant hole and took the shovel from Lin Xiao, before he proceeded to vigorously attack the ground.

Seeing Lin Dong's sudden move, Lin Xiao knew that he did not want to give up so easily. With a gentle sigh, he patted Lin Dong's shoulder. Just as he was about to ask him to relax, a crisp “ding” sound echoed out at the spot where Lin Dong's shovel fell!

In the serene woods, this “ding” sound was not particularly loud. Yet this sound caused Lin Zhentian and the rest to tremble. As one, they turned to look at the area where Lin Dong's shovel had hit. There, they discovered a faint light red glow peeking out from the soil.

The three of them stood in a daze as they stared at the traces of red light. A split second later, Lin Zhentian directly lept down. With a wave of his sleeves, a powerful gale emerged and immediately turned over the layer of earth.

As the soil was swept away, a bright red glow instantly emerged. What appeared before their eyes was a somewhat translucent light-red rock strata. On closer inspection, one could vaguely glimpse chunks of light-red crystal stone hidden within the rock strata, like gemstones that sparkled and glowed.

Red light reflected off the four faces, and on those faces, was a look of delight and awe...

“This is truly... a Yang Yuan Stone lode...”

Lin Ken foolishly stared at the red rock strata. Suddenly, his body began to tremble violently. Their Lin Family would undergo a transformation because of this!

“The heavens have blessed our Lin Family!”

Lin Zhentian looked up to the sky, so overwhelmed that tears trickled off his wrinkled face. Now that they possessed this lode, their Lin Family’s expansion rate would explode. At that time, besides Qingyang Town, even among the entire TianDu Region, their Lin Family will boast a considerable status!

As he gazed at their elated expressions, Lin Dong finally heaved a sigh of relief. He threw away the shovel in his hand and sat on the rock strata as he bathed in the warmth sensation emitted from it. A derisive smile emerged on his face as he imagined: If Lei Bao knew that there was such a treasure hidden below the Steel Wood Manor, would he vomit blood and die in rage?

Chapter 59: Killing the Panthers

Lin Zhentian chose to securely lock down news of the discovery of the Yang Yuan Stone lode. The only ones who were privy to this information were Lin Xiao, Lin Dong and a few other selected individuals.

After all, this matter was simply too important to the Lin Family. If they were able to successfully develop this mining lode, their power would undoubtedly rise dramatically. At that time, even the well-known Qingyang Town powerhouse, the Lei Family, would be unable to hold a candle to them.

Of course, before this lode was developed, it must be kept secret. If news of it was leaked to the Lei Family, they would employ every mean to destroy it. In fact, it was likely that they would directly ally with the Xie Family and pulverise the Lin Family.

Two days after confirming the existence of the mining lode, Lin Zhentian decided to station 50-60% of the Lin Family members in the Steel Wood Manor. He had done an extremely extensive job of tightening the security of the manor, turning it into a steel fortress.

Furthermore, Lin Zhentian had also moved thousands of workers from other Lin Family establishments into the manor. Most of these people would be assigned to cut the Steel Trees. However, this was only a cover. Those who were absolutely loyal to the Lin Family were secretly transferred to the deep forests, where they would help to develop the mining lode.

Of course, they must first get rid of the two Demonic Black Steel Panthers. If not, the mining operations would never go smoothly.

For many years, these two Demonic Black Steel Panthers had ruled over that particular territory with their Heavenly Yuan level strength. Furthermore, their hides were as hard as steel and their reflexes quick as lightning. Even a Heavenly Yuan human practitioner would find them exceedingly difficult opponents.

In order to deal with the two Demonic Black Steel Panthers, Lin Zhentian, along with everyone else, had made ample preparations. Grandfather was even planning to take part in the battle. However, they had to be very cautious as against two Demonic Black Steel Panthers, even the slightest slip up may result in catastrophe.

From a high ground at the entrance of the valley, Lin Dong peered down upon the two Demonic Black Steel Panthers below. He shifted his gaze as three figures suddenly jumped down from the top of a cliff, the tips of their feet gently bouncing down the walls of the cliff before steadily landing on the valley floor.

“Growl!”

Just as the trio of Lin Zhentian and two others landed in the valley, the two Demonic Black Steel Panthers were alerted by their presence. Deep and low growls immediately sounded out in the valley.

“I will handle one of them, the two of you take the other. Let’s

end this fight quickly. If they escaped, it may cause problems in future.” Lin Zhentian glared menacingly at the two Demonic Black Steel Panthers as they leapt vigorously onto some rocks. With a low shout, he immediately dashed forward, a bright Yuan Power erupting out of his body. Within that forceful Yuan Power, Yin and Yang Energy seemed to flow in almost perfect harmony with each other.

“Heavenly Yuan Late Stage. Based on Grandpa’s current strength, he is just one step away from completely harmonizing Yin and Yang Energy to form a Yuan Dan.” Lin Dong gently acknowledged his Grandfather in his heart as he gazed upon Lin Zhentian’s imposing visage. However, when Lin Dong recalled how difficult it was to step into the Yuan Dan stage, he could not help but furrow his eyebrows. Having Heavenly Yuan Stage strength was indeed enough for one to be called an elite fighter, yet it still did not reached the level of a warlord that could intimidate an entire region.

In the Great Yan Dynasty, only those who had advanced to Yuan Dan Stage were worthy of such a title!

Even though there were only a few Heavenly Yuan Stage practitioners in Qingyang Town, they were not that rare of an existence. For example, in the Lei Family, there were approximately four to five Heavenly Yuan practitioners. However, in the entire Qingyang Town, there was not a single person who had reached Yuan Dan Stage!

Based on this fact, it was enough to deduce how difficult it was to synergize one’s Yin and Yang Energy and condensed it to form a

Yuan Dan.

While Lin Dong was distracted, the battle below had already begun. A vigorous Yuan Power constantly gushed about, stirring up the gravel and dust on the floor, a level of energy not commonly seen.

Though it was tricky to deal with these Demonic Black Steel Panthers, based on Lin Dong calculations, he estimated that these two Demonic Panthers should be at Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage. Since Lin Zhentian had long progressed to Heavenly Yuan Late Stage, and Lin Xiao and Lin Ken were both at Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage, they should be able to win this battle easily.

Just as Lin Dong predicted, faced with the trio of Lin Zhentian, Lin Xiao and Lin Ken, after the two Demonic Panthers experienced the initial ruthless counter attack, signs of their eventual defeat gradually began to appear . A series of roars continuously sounded out as the creatures became more and more like cornered animals.

“Bang!”

In the middle of the valley, a muffled sound suddenly echoed out. Lin Dong immediately turned to look, only to see that Lin Zhentian had forcefully stabbed his two fingers at the forehead of one Demonic Panther. A powerful Yuan Power gushed forward, causing Lin Zhentian's two fingers to become sharp as knives, directly piercing through that Demonic Black Steel Panther's hard skull and killing it instantly.

“Chun Yuan Finger!”

As he saw that familiar attack, a flash of awe surfaced in Lin Dong’s eyes. Lin Zhentian was definitely at Heavenly Yuan Late Stage, the force displayed by his Chun Yuan Finger was at least several times more powerful than Lin Dong’s. At the very least, Lin Dong did not have the slightest bit of confidence in being able to penetrate that Heavenly Yuan tier demonic beast’s skull with one thrust of his fingers.

In the instance that Lin Zhentian killed one Demonic Black Steel Panther, the other creature immediately released an angry roar.

“Growl!”

Just as its growl sounded out, howls from several other ferocious beasts sounded out in reply from the surrounding forest. It seems that the Demonic Black Steel Panther had growled to attract them.

As he sensed the rumbling sounds of the beasts converging on them, Lin Zhentian’s facial expression slightly darkened. He never imaged that this Demonic Panther could actually summon other wild beasts. Even though these wild beasts were not as fearsome, if their numbers were large enough, they would still pose a major problem.

“Au!”

As Lin Zhentian furrowed his eyebrows, above the valley, a red

shadow suddenly flashed out as a deep tiger hiss swiftly sounded out. Immediately, the footsteps of the other wild beasts paused as they actually stopped their advance.

“Heh heh, seems like that Fire Python Tiger also possess this ability.” Upon witnessing this situation, Lin Zhentian heaved a sigh of relief. Nearby, Lin Xiao and Lin Ken attacked simultaneously, with a two prong attack from the front and back, they finally finished off the other Demonic Panther in a single punch.

“These creatures are really difficult to handle.”

Lin Xiao and Lin Ken exclaimed as they wiped their hands while gazing at the fallen bodies of the two Demonic Black Steel Panthers.

“Little Flame, well done.”

At the top of the valley, Lin Dong smiled as he praised Little Flame, who was beside him, while patting it.

Little Flame intimately rubbed against Lin Dong before it immediately released a deep roar as it leapt down into the valley. Next, it approached the Demonic Black Steel Panther corpses and opened its tiger mouth to begin tearing the bodies apart. Finally, it managed to uncover two pitch-black crystals within the corpses. With a flick of its tongue, the two crystals were swallowed into its stomach.

“This little one is really knowledgeable. It actually knows that there are Demonic Crystals within their bodies. That level of intelligence is actually quite high...” At this point, Lin Zhentian furrowed his eyebrows. After all, ordinary demonic beasts did not possess such intelligence.

“Father, we have resolved this final problem. Shall we start developing this mining lode?” Lin Ken smiled as he asked excitedly.

“Yes.”

Lin Zhentian beamed while nodding his head and said: “Tomorrow, I will dispatch Lin Mang to Yan City to first find and discuss with some merchant associations on establishing our sales and distribution channels. Then we will be able to immediately sell the Yang Yuan Stones straight after they have been mined.”

After finishing, Lin Zhentian held his hands behind his back. With a casual smile, he softly said: “ Every dog has its day. Heh heh. The Lei and Xie Families have bullied our Lin Family for so many years, now it’s time for payback!”

Upon hearing these words, a cold glint emerged in Lin Xiao and Lin Ken’s eyes as they slowly nodded their heads. All these years, they had silently endured, causing resentment to build up in their hearts. Perhaps, in just a little more time, they would finally be able to dish all this pent up resentment at the Lei and Xie Families.

Chapter 60: Tough Training

Qingyang Town, Lei Family.

Lei Bao was comfortably resting on a soft sofa in a lavish hall. At his side, two beautiful attendants were carefully massaging him.

“Is there any activity in the Lin Family?” Lei Bao, whose eyes were lightly shut, suddenly asked.

“The Lin Family have deployed a huge amount of personnel to the Steel Wood Manor and they are guarding it very closely.” To Lei Bao’s side, a middle aged man dressed in embroidered robes answered. This man was Lei Pi, second in command in the Lei Family and Lei Li’s father.

“Just a bunch of country bumpkins. As expected, they amount to nothing.” Upon hearing these words, Lei Bao involuntarily chuckled. Now that a large part of the Steel Wood Manor had been ruined, most of its value was lost. However, the Lin Family still acted as if they had found a treasure.

“Haha, even though the Steel Wood Manor had lost its former glory, to a low class family, it is still a valuable asset. How could they give up on it so easily.” Lei Pi smiled as he answered.

“Those bastards from the Lin Family caused our Lei Family to lose a Steel Wood Manor. I will not so easily let this matter go!” Lei Bao opened both of his eyes, revealing an icy glare. He turned to look at Lei Pi, who was standing beside him, and said: “Go to Yan

City and make use of our contacts there to prevent the Lin Family from selling the Steel Wood. Heh, I want to make sure that no one will do business with them!”

“Yes!”

Upon hearing these words, a sneer surfaced on Lei Pi’s face as he nodded his head.

“How is Lei Li?” Lei Bao suddenly asked.

“Losing to that brat from the Lin Family was a great blow to him.” Lei Pi sighed as he answered.

“It’s only natural to experience wins and losses in martial arts duels . If he cannot even handle this loss, how can he expect to amount to anything in future?”

Lei Bao furrowed his eyebrows for a while before continuing: “Later, go to our storeroom and take out the stored “Yang Yuan Pills” and give it to him. With that item, his training progress should hasten. In future, make sure to cripple that brat from the Lin Family.”

“Many thanks Father.”

After he heard the words “Yang Yuan Pill”, a flash of delight surfaced on Lei Pi’s face as he immediately thanked his father.

“Go. Also, remember to instruct the men to increase surveillance on the Lin Family. Humph, it’s not so easy to take something away from my Lei Family.....” As he finished his words, a sinister look surfaced on Lei Bao’s face.

.....

After the Demonic Black Panthers were dealt with, covert development of the mining lode began. Everyone that was selected to take part had to pass through a stringent selection process. The selected workers were generously compensated by the Lin Family and also allowed to bring their families to the Steel Wood Manor. This way, not only were they provided with a place to stay, but it also served a second agenda: a way to safeguard the secrets of the manor and ensure there were no leaks.

With regards to this project, Lin Dong was obviously of little help. However, he did not return to Qingyang Town because of this. After all, there were many ancient and deep forests surrounding the Steel Wood Manor. In these woods were numerous Demonic Beasts, and he was planning to train himself there.

After the clash with those guards from the Lei Family, Lin Dong clearly understood that he lacked experience in actual combat. If he did not possess such powerful Yuan Power and mastery of martial arts, he would have encountered great difficulty when he faced the Dai En duo.

With regards to actual combat, Lin Dong was unable target other humans. Therefore, he turned his attention towards the equally fearsome Demonic Beasts, and, the deep forests surrounding the Steel Wood Manor provided him with the perfect training grounds.

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“Growl!”

In the serene forests, an angry roar suddenly sounded out, causing the tree leaves to shiver.

If one were to turn towards the direction of the commotion, he would see a giant green wolf pouncing towards a human figure. However, just as that giant wolf opened its foul-smelling mouth to snap the human figure’s neck, two fingers suffused with a vigorous Yuan Power stabbed through the giant wolf’s soft underbelly and fresh, causing hot blood to spurt out.

When the fresh blood started to spray out, the human figure pushed the giant green wolf away as he attempted to catch his breath. Numerous scars dotted his body. He was clearly someone who had experienced much fighting.

After panting for a while, the human figure finally stood up, revealing a young teenage face. This was Lin Dong. Right now he turned to look at the giant green wolf that had collapsed at his feet and involuntarily laughed.

The Green Wind Wolf was a Demonic Beast that could equal an Earthly Yuan practitioner. In these two months, Lin Dong had fought numerous times with this fellow. Initially, all he could do was retreat, but now, all he needed was a single blow to end the creature's life.

The current Lin Dong did not look much different from two months before. However, he gave off a different aura now. That aura completely unrelated to one's looks but rather, he gave off the feeling of someone who had overcome several life and death struggles.

After Lin Dong had dispatched the Green Wind Wolf, a red shadow immediately dashed out from the woods and tore apart the Green Wind Wolf's carcass. When it realized there was no Demonic Crystal inside, it released an unhappy growl.

That red shadow was naturally Little Flame. Over these two months, it had accompanied Lin Dong as it also refined itself after battle. Thus, it now wore countless battle scars on its body that were results of its fights with other Demonic Beasts.

Right now, after these two months of fighting, there was a bloodthirsty stench on Little Flame. The scars on its body made it look exceptionally fearsome, bit by bit, the glorious aura of the Fire Python Tiger was emerging.

Under normal circumstances, the growth rate of Little Flame was baffling. Although it did enjoy the most luxurious treatment and even managed to devour some Demonic Crystals under Lin Dong's care. Growing from a newly born cub till it was now almost the

same size as a mature Fire Python Tiger was indeed stunning.

Based on Lin Dong's knowledge, Wu Yun's Fire Python Tiger cub was only as big as his thigh. Furthermore, its combat abilities were far below Little Flame's.....

With regards to their differences, Lin Dong was also at a loss for words. However, he was thankful that he had followed the Stone Talisman's decision that day. After all, Little Flame was definitely special compared to the other two cubs.

In these two month's of training, both Little Flame and Lin Dong had improved substantially. However, the only thing that Lin Dong felt regretful about was that he was still quite far from progressing to Earthly Yuan Later Stage. Though as a consolation, he had completed unblocked all seven inner channels of the QingYuan Arts.....

Overall, the fruits of these two month's of training were rather sweet.

“It's getting late, let's head back...”

Lin Dong took out a bottle and poured out an Elixir Pill, stuffing it into Little Flame's mouth. Then, he gazed at the dwindling pills in the bottle as the corners of his mouth formed into a bitter smile while he shook his head. As Little Flame grew, it had become increasingly picky. The Stone Talisman Ling Liquid was unable to suffice it anymore.....

As he mounted Little Flame, Lin Dong whistled. In response, Little Flame turned into a red shadow as it swiftly dashed out of the woods.....

.....

Once he returned to the Steel Wood Manor, Lin Dong quickly went to wash up. After he changed his clothes, he headed towards the mountain behind the manor and passed through a heavy barricade before finally reaching the mining lode.

Right now, the mountain had completely changed. There was a long tunnel stretching deep into the mountain as “ding ding dang dang” noises constantly sounded out from within.

Guarding the tunnel entrance was Lin Xiao. Beside him were two large cases. These cases were filled to the brim with light red Yang Yuan Stones.

“Father, the harvest seems pretty good.” As he gazed at the two cases of glittering Yang Yuan Stones, Lin Dong licked his lips and smiled.

“Right now, we don’t have enough utilizable manpower. Therefore, the number of Yang Yuan Stones that we can harvest per day is still limited. In these two months, we managed to harvest four hundred and eighty seven stones.” Lin Xiao replied. However, his expression indicated that he was extremely satisfied with this harvest. After all, this was already equivalent to their entire past year’s income.

“These four hundred plus Yang Yuan Stones can be traded for approximately forty Yang Yuan Pills.”

“Yang Yuan Pill?” Lin Dong was stunned as he inquisitively asked.

“Some elite practitioners are able to harvest the Yang Energy within these Yang Yuan Stones and condense them into Yang Yuan Pills. These pills are extremely beneficial for any practitioner below Yuan Dan Stage. Based on my calculations, it takes ten Yang Yuan Stones to produce one Yang Yuan Pill. Heh heh, for some major factions, these Yang Yuan Stones and Yang Yuan Pills are probably a better currency than silver or gold...” Lin Xiao was evidently in a good mood as he slowly explained.

“Oh?” Lin Dong was shocked. This was the first time he heard of this.

“Father has already decided. Tomorrow, we will send three hundred Yang Yuan Stones to Yan City and exchange them for Yang Yuan Pills in order to bolster our Lin Family’s strength.”

“Heading to Yan City tomorrow?” A flash of delight surfaced in Lin Dong’s eyes. Yan City was the largest city nearby, and it was quite famous even in the entire Yan Dynasty. It was far more exciting and lively than Qingyang Town.

“Haha, you are the star of our Lin Family. Rest assured, I will definitely take you along tomorrow.” At Lin Dong’s expression, Lin

Xiao could not help but laughed as he promised.

Lin Dong chuckled and then turned his head as he looked at the chest filled with Yang Yuan Stones, a look of awe on his face. To one side, Lin Xiao said a little more before leaving after he instructed the guards to keep a tight watch.

Just as Lin Xiao walked away, Lin Dong involuntarily reached out to grab three Yang Yuan Stones. When his hand grabbed the Yang Yuan Stones the Stone Talisman embedded in his palm suddenly vibrated. Following which, the light red glow of the three Yang Yuan Stones darkened rapidly. Moments later, the stones turned dull before eventually disintegrating into dust.

As he witnessed this sudden development, Lin Dong's facial expression also changed drastically.

Chapter 61: Yang Yuan Pills

This chapter was brought to you by Alexej Miller and ryan clark!

Gazing at the powder falling from the palm of his hand, Lin Dong's facial expression changed drastically. Just as he was about to panic over this matter, he suddenly saw tiny streams of light shooting out from his right palm before finally crisscrossing together and, to his surprise, condensing into a thumb-sized fiery-red pill!

When that fiery-red pill appeared on his palm, Lin Dong's eyelids violently blinked twice. Recalling all the magical properties possessed by the Stone Talisman, he deduced that it had likely refined the three pieces of Yang Yuan Stone.....

As his lips opened briefly, Lin Dong discreetly stuffed that fiery-red pill into his sleeves. Then, as he turned around to look, he heaved a sigh of relief when he realized that no one around had noticed this sudden turn of events. Next, he extended his palm again and grabbed three pieces of Yang Yuan Stone, before he immediately exited the mining lode. Just as he ran into the woods, he shouted towards Lin Xiao with a laugh: "Father, let me play with some Yang Yuan Stones."

After he shouted, Lin Dong immediately left without waiting for Lin Xiao to reply.

"This brat....."

As he stared at Lin Dong's back, Lin Xiao helplessly shook his head. However, he did not take this matter to heart. After all, Lin Dong now held an extremely high status in the family, one that may even exceed his, and no one would think to complain if he took a few Yang Yuan Stones.

After Lin Dong exited the mining lode, he immediately slipped back towards his room and shut his room door tightly. Finally, he heaved a sigh of relief, as he flipped over his palm and a fiery-red pill immediately appeared in his eyes.

This fiery-red pill seemed much more potent and rich compared to the Elixir Pills refined from those Grade 3 Elixirs. Thanks to this fiery-red complexion, it seemed like this pill contained a massive amount of energy, it felt extremely warm.

“Is this the Yang Yuan Pill that Father previously mentioned?” Lin Dong muttered to himself, as he fiddled with this warm fiery-red pill.

The Yang Yuan Pill that Lin Xiao had mentioned previously, was refined from Yang Yuan Stones by certain skilled practitioners. In fact, the actions of the Mysterious Stone Talisman seemed exactly similar.

“However, Father did mention that in order to refine one “Yang Yuan Pill”, it would typically require ten Yang Yuan Stones... However, previously, the Stone Talisman only used three Yang Yuan Stones.”

Lin Dong furrowed his eyebrows. If this pill was really the so-called “Yang Yuan Pill”, then there can only be one explanation: The Mysterious Stone Talisman refining skill is at a truly terrifying stage. While others require ten Yang Yuan Stone to refine one Yang Yuan Pill, it only required three pieces of Yang Yuan Stone. It’s efficiency, was more than three times!

As he thought of this point, even Lin Dong felt a little taken aback. If news of this matter spread out, it would definitely cause a major commotion. In fact, after this commotion, the most likely possibility was that he would be captured by some powerful major factions, and forced to refine “Yang Yuan Pills” daily in a tiny dark room...

Lin Dong wiped off his cold sweat, as he immediately focused his attention on the three Yang Yuan Stones on his lap. He was curious to determine if the Stone Talisman truly possessed such a terrifying ability, and he decided to test it again.

As this thought flashed through his mind, without further ado, Lin Dong immediately removed the three Yang Yuan Stones from his lap and stacked them on his right palm.

“Buzz!”

Just as that three Yang Yuan Stones were piled on his palm, tiny streams of light burst out from his palm against. Under the glare of these light beams, the Yang Yuan Stone began to darken rapidly, before it immediately turned into a pile of dust moments later.

Just as the Yang Yuan Stones turned into dust, the light beams crisscrossed, as a fiery-red pill once again appeared on Lin Dong's palm.

“It is indeed the case...”

As Lin Dong stared at that fiery-red pill, he involuntarily heaved a deep breath, as a serious expression surfaced on his face.

“This matter must be concealed.”

As he softly sighed, Lin Dong released a pained laugh. Perhaps some truly powerful practitioners possess such a terrifying refining ability, however, he was not one of them. Right now, he was not some powerful elite practitioner, hence if he displayed this ability, it will not only inspire awe, but also bring about disaster. In fact, it may even devastate the entire Lin Family.

“Let's test out the effects of this Yang Yuan Pill.”

Lin Dong flicked his head, as he gradually calmed himself down. Then, he took off his shoes and sat on his bed. However, he did not immediately swallow that Yang Yuan Pill. Instead, he chose to exert QingYuan Arts first, in order to absorb the Yuan Power from between Heaven and Earth, and strengthen his body and Dan Yuan.

Lin Dong kept training quietly for approximately an hour, before he finally popped that Yang Yuan Pill into his mouth.

“Thud!”

Just as that Yang Yuan Pill entered his body, Lin Dong’s both ears suddenly heard a loud echo. Instantly, a tsunami of warmth energy quickly spread across his body. This energy was rich and powerful, however it was not savage and could be easily absorbed. Therefore, one’s body felt extremely warm, just like soaking in a sauna, extremely comfortable.

As that warm energy circulated around his body, it seeped into his bones, inner channels, and flesh before it finally poured into his Dan Yuan.

“Hua la la....”

As that tsunami-wave energy poured into his Dan Yuan, Lin Dong could vividly feel that the Yuan Power within his Dan Yuan had grown and strengthened. Eventually, he even heard crisp “hua la la” sounds echoing out.

“Huff...”

As the Yuan Power in his Dan Yuan grew stronger, steam starting to emerge from Lin Dong’s head. Moments later, his calm body began to vibrate uncontrollability. As he opened both of his eyes, a bright Yuan Power involuntarily undulated on his body’s outer surface, just like tidal waves.

“Earthly Yuan Later Stage!”

As he sensed the powerful Yuan Power within his Dan Tian, an uncontrollable delight surfaced on Lin Dong’s face. After two fruitless months of training, he had finally achieved a breakthrough!

In just five months’ time, Lin Dong had advanced from Earthly Yuan Early Stage to Earthly Yuan Later Stage. This training progress is enough to shock anyone.

Even that famed Lin Langtian, took two years before he advanced from Earthly Yuan Stage to Heavenly Yuan Stage. Even though it was difficult to advance from Earthly Yuan Later Stage to Heavenly Yuan Stage, Lin Dong was confident that, in a year’s time, he will breakthrough to Heavenly Yuan Stage!

Lin Dong’s was already a talented individual. In addition to his own hard work and perseverance, and help from the Stone Talisman, his training progress is unmatched.

“This is indeed a Yang Yuan Pill...”

Lin Dong lifted his head, as he exhaled a mouth of white air. A comfortable sensation slowly spread out across his body, as he muttered to himself, while keeping both of his eyes gently shut.

Chapter 62: Yan City

This chapter was brought to you by Ryan Clark!

The next day, in front of the Steel Wood Manor, were several horse carriages neatly aligned together. Stacked on these horse carriages, were piles of bounded Steel Wood.

On the surface, the purpose of this trip to Yan City was to sell Steel Wood. However, the real motive was to sell the Yang Yuan Stone. However, this real motive could not be easily revealed. Or else, it could lead to some unexpected trouble.

With regards to this first sale, Lin Zhentian placed heavy emphasis on it and he decided to lead it personally. In addition, he even instructed Lin Xiao, Lin Mang and several hundred guards to accompany him. This was a pretty significant force, and normal bandits would definitely not dare to harass them.

Lin Zhentian rode atop of a handsome horse. With a powerful aura and a tough body, one has to truly respect this old man who single handedly built up his family in this Qingyang Town.

“Has everyone arrived?” After a cursory inspection, Lin Zhentian turned his head towards Lin Xiao and asked.

Seated beside Lin Xiao, Lin Dong also rode on a handsome horse. For this journey to the Yan City, the most important thing was to avoid trouble. Since Little Flame will inadvertently attract much attention, it was best to leave it in the Steel Wood Manor.

After hearing Lin Zhentian's enquiry, Lin Xiao nodded his head as he replied in a deep voice: "It's all ready. We can leave anytime!"

"Good."

Upon hearing his reply, Lin Zhentian nodded his head in satisfaction. Without further ado, he waved his hand as he promptly raised his whip and instructed his horse to dash off towards the main road.

As Lin Zhentian left, the massive army immediately followed amidst a series of echoes.

As he clipped his legs around the horse's back, Lin Dong turned to wave goodbye to Qing Tan, before he immediately followed behind them.

...

Yan City was the closest major city located near Qingyang Town. Of course, this was only a comparative way of speaking, because when Lin Zhentian and the rest arrived at the outskirts of Yan City, it was already noon.

The major road leading up to Yan City, was filled with people and it was extremely crowded and noisy, causing Lin Dong to involuntarily swallow his tongue. Even though they had not arrived at Yan City, it was already this crowded. One could only

imagine the crowd when one arrives in the middle of Yan City.

“Dong-er, when we arrive in the city, do not stir up any trouble. This Yan City is extremely complicated, and there could be many powerful people hidden within. Remember that some of them must not be offended.” As he stared at Lin Dong’s inquisitive face, Lin Xiao, who was standing beside him, immediately warned him.

Lin Dong smiled, before he suddenly asked: “Father, this Yan City is so much bigger than Qingyang Town. The battles between its major factions must surely be more intensive?”

“In this Yan City, approximately one major faction dies every month, while a new faction takes its place. So what do you think?” Lin Xiao smiled as he answered.

“However, in this Yan City, there are three major factions that stand above the rest. No one can threaten their position...”

“Oh? Which three?” Lin Dong curiously asked.

“Yan City Lord Manor, Ten Thousand Gold Merchants and Blood Wolf Gang.” Lin Xiao pursed his lips. These factions were definitely in a different league compared to their Lin Family.

“In these three major factions, there are numerous highly skilled practitioners. In fact, some of them even have Dan Yuan practitioners. In the Yan City outskirts, even though there are numerous other factions, most of them rely on these three major

factions to survive.”

Lin Dong silently muttered to himself, as he gently nodded his head. In this place, only a Yuan Dan practitioner, had the right to speak.

“Haha, no need to be discouraged. Once our Lin Family successfully develops that mining Lode, we can develop another Yuan Dan practitioner. At that time, our Lin Family will have a place in this Yan City.” As he saw Lin Dong turn silent, Lin Xiao thought that he had been discouraged. Therefore, he immediately approached him as he smiled and told him.

After hearing these words, Lin Dong smiled. Dan Yuan Stage... He was truly curious regarding this stage...

...

The horse carriages calmly traversed through the crowd as it finally reached the gates of Yan City. As he saw that nearly hundred-foot tall wall surrounding the city, Lin Dong swallowed his tongue again. Comparing Qingyang Town with this city, it definitely seemed a little lackluster.

After they paid a small token at the city's gate, the horse carriages successfully entered Yan City.

After they passed through a dark and serene tunnel, immediately, a deafening noise swarmed them like a tidal wave,

causing Lin Dong, who was not prepared at all, to feel a little nauseous. Moments later, he recovered his senses, only to see huge crowds of people on the streets. As he turned to look at the grand architecture in the city, he involuntarily released a deep breath...

“Let’s look for a place to rest first.”

This was evidently not the first time that Lin Zhentian and the rest visited Yan City, as they seemed pretty familiar with the roads when they lead the carriages through multiple streets, before they finally settled down at a serene inn.

They settled their plan in the inn. They would split into two forces. The first division would be led by Lin Mang and he was in charge of selling the Steel Wood. As for Lin Zhentian and Lin Xiao, they would personally take charge of two cases of Yang Yuan Stone. Finally, Lin Dong and the rest of the guards would stay behind in the inn.

As he saw Lin Zhentian and the rest leaving, Lin Dong was exasperated. After approximately half an hour’s time of waiting, he finally decided to venture out on his own. After all, it was a rare opportunity to visit Yan City, and he did not want to waste it sitting in this inn..

As Lin Dong casually loitered in Yan City, because he did not have a defined purpose, he decided to follow the crowds. Eventually, he slowly drifted towards the center of the city.

Perhaps it was because there were several factions, compared to

Qingyang Town, this Yan City seemed to be more chaotic. Along the way, Lin Dong saw three different groups of people fighting with each other. However, with regards to these scuffles, most people seemed indifferent to them. In fact, there were several in the crowd cheering them on. Based on their expressions, it seemed like they were not worried that they would be involved.

Lin Dong was not particularly interested in these disputes, therefore he only glanced at them before he turned to leave. After travelling through several streets, he finally stopped in front of a fairly large and grand building.

“Mysterious Objects Tower.”

As Lin Dong stared at the three words inscribed on the tower, a flash of awe surfaced in his eyes. Even someone like him, who rarely ventured into Qingyang Town, had faintly heard of this “Mysterious Objects Tower.” Henceforth, this was evidently a famous landmark.

As he stood in front of the door, Lin Dong hesitated for a moment, before he finally stepped inside.

As Lin Dong stepped through the door, a large hall immediately surfaced in front of his eyes. In this large hall, were numerous shelves and within these shelves, were numerous items being displayed.

Elixirs, Elixir Pills, Weapons, Demonic Crystals, Martial Arts Manuals...

As he glanced around, Lin Dong saw all kinds of items. He immediately understood that most of these items, were not of an ordinary background.

“Haha, this young gentlemen here. What do you require?” As Lin Dong was staring around at the items in the shelf, an assistance dressed in green clothes walked over and asked with a smile, before he took out a long black sword from a shelf.

“Black Steel Sword. This was forged from a hundred pieces of black steel. It is extremely sharp and can even cut through feathers. Furthermore, a famous master carved symbols and injected Yuan Power into it. Therefore, it can pierce through any armour. If you possessed it, it would definitely boost your fighting abilities.”

Lin Dong looked at that black sword and saw that inscribed on it, was a weird wiggly symbol that was faintly glowing.

Shaking his head, Lin Dong was evidently not interested in this item. After witnessing this situation, that assistant had no choice but to put that steel sword away, before he tirelessly recommended other items to Lin Dong.

Lin Dong did not pay much heed to him, as he slowly scanned through the shelves. Moments later, he suddenly stopped. Right in front of his eyes, stood a small palm-sized green sack. A weird glow flashed on the surface of that rope sack.

Low Level Qian Kun Bag, Forty Eight Yang Yuan Stones.

Chapter 63: Symbol Master

“Low grade Qian Kun bag. Made from Qian Kun wood and the Mystical Symbols inscribed on it were done by a 2nd Seal Symbol Master. Don’t be fooled by its small size, it can contain an object the size of a desk and still allow its user to easily carry it along. A very convenient item that can solve many problems.” Observing that Lin Dong seemed to have taken an interest in the Qian Kun bag, the assistant in green quickly introduced the item as he smiled.

Lin Dong was perplexed, he did not expect to encounter such a magical item that he had never heard of before. Yan City was truly in a different league from Qingyang Town.

2nd Seal Symbol Master?

Just as Lin Dong was surprised by the unusual function of the Qian Kun bag, the particular title mentioned by the assistant caused his heart to tremble. In the Great Yan Empire, there was a unique vocation termed Symbol Master. It is reputed that these people could condense Yuan Power from Heaven and Earth into special Mystical Symbols.

As for these Mystical Symbols, the various ways in which they were structured allowed them to possess different abilities. For example, the black steel sword from before also had a Mystical Symbol carved onto it which upgraded its durability and sharpness.

Symbol Master was one of several different vocations that branched out from the path of those who practised the martial way. However, for this vocation, one not only needed a certain level of strength in the physical body as support but it also placed a heavy and strict demand on one's mental capacity. Therefore, Symbol Master was considered a scarce vocation.

These Symbol Masters also have their own ranking system. According to Lin Dong's knowledge, they were split by Seals and there were a total of 5 Seals: 1st Seal being the lowest, while 5th Seal being the highest. Of course, Lin Dong did not know if there were more advanced levels beyond that.

Typically speaking, even the minimum requirements to become a 1st Seal Symbol Master was to reach Earthly Yuan Stage. In fact, if one could advance to 2nd Seal Symbol Master, he would be lavishly welcomed by any major faction in Yan City.

Hence, when Lin Dong heard that this Qian Kun bag had a Mystical Symbol inscribed on it by a 2nd Seal Symbol Master, he was a little surprised.

With regards to this Qian Kun bag, Lin Dong was very interested. However, its price caused him to furrow his eyebrows. Their Lin Family took two whole months to harvest over the four hundred or so Yang Yuan Stones. However, this Qian Kun Bag alone required nearly one-tenth of their harvest.

Lin Dong definitely could not procure 48 Yang Yuan Stones. Therefore, after a deep sigh, he took out a bottle from within his clothes. Contained within that bottle were ten Elixir Pills of

various colors. These were naturally refined by Lin Dong from Grade 3 Elixirs.

“Have someone take a look at this and tell me how much they are worth.” Lin Dong smiled as he placed the bottle on the counter.

Upon hearing these words, that assistant dressed in green started examining the Elixir Pills within the bottle. The fact that he could be employed as an assistant here clearly meant that he was equipped with a discerning eye. Instantly, awe flashed across his face before he promptly shook a small bell behind him..

Soon after the bell rang, a middle aged man, that seemed like the manager, quickly walked over. He was all smiles as he asked: “Is this young gentleman here to sell something?”

While he spoke, he had already turned his attention towards the bottle on the counter. He reached out to retrieve one Elixir Pill and placed the pill under his nose and took two gentle sniffs. His eyebrows involuntarily twitched as he said: “The pills from this young gentleman here should be refined from Elixirs? The medicinal property is gentle and pure, extremely suitable for Tempered Body or Earthly Yuan practitioners.”

“I guess so...”

Lin Dong scratched his head as a foolish expression appeared on his face. Based on that expression, it seemed like he knew little about these Elixir Pills.

After seeing his expression, that middle aged man chuckled. He already secretly thought in his heart that Lin Dong had acquire these Elixir Pills by luck.

“Little brother, this is my deal. For these Elixir Pills, I will trade them each for five Yuan Yuan Stones. What do you think?” A glint flashed across that middle aged man’s eyes as he asked.

“So based on my calculations, if I buy this Qian Kun Bag, I will only have two Yang Yuan Stones left? Then I don’t want it.” Lin Dong rolled his eyes as he immediately grabbed the bottle back.

“Haha, no hurry. So what does the young gentleman propose?” Upon seeing this situation, the middle aged man hurriedly asked.

“One for ten.”

As he heard his childlike tone, that middle aged man felt slightly helpless. Shaking his head, he uttered: “Alright, one for seven. I won’t cheat you. This price is considered fair, what do you think?”

“Alright.”

This time, Lin Dong did not hesitate as he agreed immediately. After seeing his straightforward expression, that middle aged man let out a bitter laugh. He then instructed the assistant beside him to retrieve the Qian Kun bag before he placed the remaining Yang Yuan Stones into the bag in front of Lin Dong.

Lin Dong somewhat impatiently received the bag. As Lin Dong stretched his hand inside the bag to grab onto those warm yang Yuan Stones, he could feel that it was slightly rough around the entrance.

Even though the interior of that Qian Kun Bag was not enormous, Lin Dong was still extremely pleased with it.

“Haha, young gentleman. If you have more of these Elixir Pills, you can continue to sell them to us. The price will be the same.” As he saw Lin Dong play with that Qian Kun bag, that middle aged man smiled as he said.

“Alright, next time I will return to the same spot where I found them and see if I can find anymore.” Towards the middle aged man’s words, Lin Dong earnestly nodded as he replied.

“.....”

That middle aged man’s face twitched slightly before he finally nodded his head with a dry smile.

In his heart, Lin Dong secretly chuckled. Then, ignoring that middle aged man, he turned his attention towards the Qian Kun bag. Finally, his gaze, inadvertently concentrated on the left side of that Qian Kun bag where a unique Mystical Symbol was faintly discernable.

Lin Dong kept his gaze peeled on that unique Mystical Symbol as

his mind unconsciously concentrated on it. Based on his expression, it seemed like he had encountered an extremely interesting object.

Just as Lin Dong was fixated on that symbol, his vision suddenly turned slightly blurry. However, as his surroundings turned blurry, the symbol faintly printed on the Qian Kun bag gradually became clearer and clearer.

Under this peculiar circumstances, Lin Dong's mind suddenly felt a unique undulation. That was Mental Energy. Streams of formless Mental Energy flowed out from his brain and actually appeared in front of him, before they slowly intersected together. Although the shape they formed was crude and blurry, it seemed somewhat similar to that complicated symbol on that Qian Kun bag!

In the end, the final picture was not completed. When half of the symbol was formed, he suddenly felt a violent pain in his mind. Promptly, he recovered his wits and found himself completely drenched in cold sweat. Stunned, he evidently did not understand what had just happened.

In a corner of the Mysterious Objects Building sat an old man clothed in grey clothes. He sleepily sat to one side while his surroundings seemed extremely messy and looked out of place compared to the tidy and orderly look the rest of the place had. However, from start to end, no one dared to make a single sound to disturb him. Whoever walked past him, be it employees or customers, all softened their footsteps as they did not dare to cause even the slightest disturbance.

The old man also seemed oblivious towards his surroundings. With both of his eyes tightly shut, he seemed to be on the verge of falling asleep. However, this state was momentarily disrupted. He suddenly opened his tightly shut eyes and turned his head to stare at a young man nearby. A heavy look of awe flashed in the former's eyes as his mumbling voice slowly sounded out.

“Such a strong Mental Energy talent!”

Chapter 64: Grand Master Yan

When Lin Dong awoke from that peculiar state, he found that his whole body was drenched with cold sweat. He trepidly looked at the Qian Kun bag in his hands, struggling to comprehend what just happened.

Fortunately, Mental Energy was formless and colorless, therefore, no one else had witnessed the Mystical Symbol forming. Otherwise, it might draw several strange gazes.

“Did you sell these Elixir Pills?”

Lin Dong secretly heaved a sigh of relief as he stuffed the Qian Kun Bag into his sleeves. Just as he was about to leave, a female voice echoed out, causing Lin Dong to stop in his step. He turned his head back, only to see a young lady dressed in a light-red dress standing beside the counter, waving a bottle at him.

This young lady looked extremely elegant and beautiful, her small cherry-like mouth, fined eyebrows and slim figure drew the fiery-gazes of several males. However, the only regrettable point was the indifferent look on that beautiful face. Furthermore, this young lady gave off an aura of nobility. She was definitely from a wealthy and respectable family.

Behind that young lady, a middle aged man followed. Even though that man did not speak a single word, Lin Dong could feel a form of pressure emitting from the man's body. This type of pressure was something he had felt before from Lin Xiao and the

rest. Evidently, this bodyguard-like fellow was at Heavenly Yuan Stage.

“Why?” Lin Dong glanced at that young lady. Even though the latter was very pretty, he did not lose his composure as he inquisitively asked.

“These Elixir Pills are very suitable for Tempered Body Practitioners. I have a sister that requires it. If you have any more, you can sell them all to me in bulk. I am sure that you will be very satisfied with my price.” That young lady casually said after she looked at Lin Dong and felt that there was nothing extraordinary about the latter. Furthermore, based on his unfamiliar appearance, he seemed unlikely to be some young master from any of the major factions in Yan City.

Lin Dong eyebrows raised slightly. Though the young lady’s tone made him somewhat uncomfortable, he was still able to tolerate it. Immediately, he waved his hands as he replied: “I have no more. I was just lucky that one time. If you are interested, I can find you when I have the fortune of coming across such treasures again.”

After hearing these words, that young lady’s elegant eyebrows involuntarily knitted together. She did not feel accustomed to Lin Dong’s tone and expression. In Yan City, she was used to fawning and flattering everyday. This was one of the few times that someone had tactfully rejected her.

“Heh heh. Qing Xu, if you need Elixir Pills, just tell me. Why is there a need for you to find others to buy from them?” Just as that young lady furrowed her eyebrows, a laughter suddenly rang out.

Promptly, Lin Dong saw a handsome man dressed in embroidered robes swiftly walking over.

When she saw that man appear, a look of disdain immediately flashed across Qing Xu's face.

To one side, Lin Dong shook his head as he saw this scene. He was not interested in the affairs between these pampered young masters and misses, and immediately turned to leave. However, just as he turned around, he saw a figure standing in front of him. Lin Dong looked up, only to see that it was that middle-aged man that was standing behind that young lady.

“Young lady, what do you plan on doing?” Lin Dong's facial expression darkened as his gaze turned towards the young lady.

“I want these kind of Elixir Pills. I believe you should have more.” The young lady dressed in red replied.

“Ha, so you are robbing me now?” After hearing these words, Lin Dong coldly chuckled. Even though this young lady looked very pretty, she was extremely irksome. Did she think that everything under the sun is entitled towards her?

“I told you, I will give you a generous price.” The young lady dressed in red furrowed her eyebrows. Evidently, she did not understand Lin Dong's resistance.

“Haha, young gentleman. If Qing Xu fancies this item, just give it

to her. You must have heard of the Liu Family of Yan City? Its always better to make friends than enemies...” Upon seeing that the young lady was insistent on buying the pills that Lin Dong had, the man that had previously appeared before him walked over with a smile and softly said to Lin Dong.

“Yan City Liu Family?”

After hearing these words, Lin Dong suddenly understood. This Liu Family was considered a major faction in Yan City. In fact, it’s power was second only to that of the Yan City Governor, the Thousand Gold Merchants and the Blood Wolf Gang. Therefore, it was considered quite a powerful faction in Yan City. No wonder this young lady could afford to be this haughty, it turns out that she had a pretty impressive background.

“My apologizes. These Elixir Pills were truly acquired by chance. Even if you want more, there is nothing I can do about it.”

Lin Dong shook his head again. Ignoring the darkening expression on that man’s face, he turned to leave.

“Hold it!”

After he saw Lin Dong’s actions, that handsome young man’s expression turned into a mix of green and red as he decided to step in. With a shout, his palm clawed towards Lin Dong’s shoulder.

“Get lost!”

As he sensed that powerful force behind his body, anger swelled up in Lin Dong's heart. Immediately, a thick Yuan Power rapidly rushed to his fist as it flew forward to clash against that man's palm attack.

“Bang!”

A gale blew forth. Lin Dong's shoulder jerked as he unloaded a strong force. Meanwhile, that handsome young man was blown back a step.

“To think that this person's strength is at Earthly Yuan Later Stage too!”

After they crossed blows, a smither of shock flitted across Lin Dong's eyes. He did not expect that this greasy-looking fellow actually had some ability.

In comparison to the shock in Lin Dong's heart, that young man was also extremely taken aback in his heart. Even though he could not be considered as one of the finest younger generation member in Yan City, he was considered as one of the elites. However, he did not expect that he was unable to take care of a seemingly fifteen-sixteen year old youngster!

After he pushed back that man with a punch, Lin Dong rapidly retreated. However, just as he was retreating, that Heavenly Yuan practitioner nearby suddenly made his move. His huge hands were like an eagle's claw as they swiftly swiped at Lin Dong.

When he saw the Heavenly Yuan practitioner make his move, Lin Dong's expression somewhat darkened. Yuan Power swiftly gushed from his Dan Tian as his hands also rapidly formed a series of complex hand-seals.

“Boom!”

However, just as Lin Dong prepared to use his strongest move to counter that Heavenly Yuan Early Stage practitioner, the middle aged man that was charging forward abruptly came to a halt as a gentle formless force erupted before him and jolted him backwards.

“Fighting is prohibited in the Mysterious Objects Building. Don't you know the rules?”

Lin Dong was slightly taken aback by this sudden development. As he turned his head, he saw an old man dressed in grey robes, who had unknowingly appeared behind him.

“Grand Master Yan.”

After seeing this elderly man clothed in grey clothes, all traces of haughtiness disappeared from the young lady clothed in red and handsome young man's faces. Based on their respectful expressions, Lin Dong deduced that this old man was probably an extraordinary figure.

“Grand Master Yan, Qing Xu was lacking in manners. Please have mercy.”

As he gazed at the suddenly respectful young lady, that old man casually waved his hands, not paying much heed to her. Instead, he turned to look intensely at Lin Dong, who was standing in front of him. Moments later, he suddenly extended a wrinkled finger and lightly tapped on the spot between Lin Dong’s eyebrows.

Lin Dong was stunned as he saw the old man’s action. He tried to dodge but to his horror, he found that he had lost all control over his body.

The old man’s finger quickly came to a stop at Lin Dong’s forehead, The former could clearly feel an extraordinarily lively Mental Energy contained within the latter’s mind. Instantly, a flash of delight surfaced on his stern old face.

“Young man, are you interested in becoming a Symbol Master?”

The old man’s following words caused the smile on the young lady and man’s faces to turn stiff and rigid.

Chapter 65: Obstruction

The area where Lin Dong and the rest were at, suddenly become much quieter after that old man uttered those words. Not only did that young lady dressed in red turned stiff but even the shopkeeper and assistant who were respectfully standing to one side, were also dumbstruck.

“Symbol Master?”

Lin Dong was also taken aback as he looked at that old man in grey. Based on the respectful expressions from the people nearby, the latter must be a big shot in Yan City. However, he did not understand: Why did this big shot suddenly utter these words to him?

Lin Dong had always maintained a certain level of cautiousness towards strangers, especially in circumstances that seem almost too good to be true. His finger drew circles on his palm, he knew that his biggest secret lay within this flesh. Right now, he was not confident that he could completely hide this secret in front of some truly skilled practitioners.

“Old mister, right now I am still quite weak. If I further distract myself by practising Symbol Arts, I am afraid it will hinder my progress. I hope you can understand and forgive me.”

As thoughts rapidly swirled around in Lin Dong’s mind, he finally gave this reply which once again caused the facial expressions of that young lady clothed in red and the rest to

change even more dramatically. They stared at him as though they were looking at a fool. This fellow... Does he know how many people dream of becoming Grand Master Yan's disciple? How dare he reject his offer?!

“Haha, becoming a Symbol Master is not only about inscribing Mystical Symbols on objects. A real Symbol Master can easily shake mountains and move rivers.” This rejection clearly caused the old man dressed in grey to be slightly startled. Promptly, he smiled as he elaborated. After all, he felt that it would be a huge waste not to develop this outstanding Mental Energy potential.

However, the more gracious he was, the more Lin Dong did not dare to agree. If he had no secrets, he would gladly accept the offer from this almost certainly extraordinary man of power. It was a pity that he was now in possession of the mysterious Stone Talisman. He was not certain if the person before him would still be this friendly if this secret was exposed...

“Old mister, please allow me to go back and discuss this with my family. Once I reach a conclusion, I will return here to look for you.” After deliberating for a while, Lin Dong finally replied.

“Since you are currently not interested I won't force you. Once you have thought it through, you can bring these items to the Thousand Gold Merchants and look for me. After all, it seems like we were fated to meet, so let me give you these items to help you better understand the path of a Symbol Master.” With regards to Lin Dong's insistence, the old man felt slightly resigned. Without further ado, he took out two items from his chest, a talisman and a book, and tossed them towards Lin Dong.

“Many thanks old mister.”

Lin Dong received these items before immediately shoving them into the newly purchased Qian Kun bag. When he saw the perplexed gazes from the crowd nearby, he decided that he could not afford stay any longer. Instantly, he turned towards that handsome young man, who was still in his way, and asked: “May I?”

After hearing these words, that young man regained his wits. His lips twitched for a second, but in the end, he finally decided to step aside. Previously, based on his own background, he need not even bother with Lin Dong. However, the situation had now reversed. Since Grand Master Yan had taken a liking towards Lin Dong, the young man was unable to be as unbridled as before...

To one side, the young lady’s lips twitched a little, but she eventually calmed down. Judging from this situation, it seems like Grand Master Yan had taken a liking to Lin Dong. If Lin Dong really became his disciple in the future, then he would become a notable person in Yan City. Therefore, it would be unwise to offend him.

As they fell silent, Lin Dong straightaway passed that young man and swiftly exited this strange atmosphere in the Mysterious Objects Tower before quickly blending into the crowded streets.

.....

After he entered into the crowd, Lin Dong finally heaved a sigh of relief. He did not bother to shop anymore as he directly went back to the guesthouse where they were resting at. Soon after he arrived at the guesthouse, Lin Zhentian and the rest also returned one by one.

“Father, how did it go?”

Lin Dong could not help but ask when he saw Lin Xiao and the rest return.

“Haha, not bad. After all, it’s really easy to sell these Yang Yuan Stones and we got a pretty decent price too. Three hundred Yang Yuan Stones were exchanged for thirty-two Yang Yuan Pills.” Lin Xiao smiled as he nodded his head. Based on his expression, it seemed like the sale worked out pretty well.

Standing beside him, Lin Zhentian also beamed as he nodded.

As they were conversing, the tightly shut door was pushed open once again and Lin Mang walk in with a dark expression on his face.

“What happened?” As he saw Lin Mang’s expression, Lin Zhentian furrowed his eyebrows and asked.

“The price of the Steel Wood was forcefully lowered by 30%. Damnit. It took me a massive amount of effort before I found out that the Lei Family had purposely pulled strings to shortchange

us!” Lin Mang gritted his teeth as he said.

After hearing these words, Lin Zhentian and Lin Xiao’s facial expressions also slightly darkened. This Lei Family was truly persistent in causing trouble for them.

“Forget it, let’s drop this issue for the time being. The most important thing right now is the Yang Yuan Stones. We will make sure to settle everything else with them in the future!” After a moment of silence, Lin Zhentian finally exclaimed with a wave of his hand. So long as the mining lode was established, the sale of the Steel Wood was just a minor matter.

“Yes.”

Lin Xiao and Lin Mang nodded their heads. As Lin Zhentian had said, currently, the most important matter was still the Yang Yuan Stones.

“Since our business here is settled, we should get moving.” Lin Zhentian muttered. After all, several elite members of the Lin Family were mobilized this time, and it was best that they did not stay away for too long.

With regards to Lin Zhentian’s decision, no one objected as they immediately nodded their heads. Then, they began to give instructions to organize the transportation and leave the city.

.....

When Lin Zhentian and the rest were preparing to leave the city, in a certain room located in Yan City, two figures were seated. One of them, was Lei Pi from Lei Family.

“Haha, this time, we must really thank Manager Hua.” Lei Pi smiled as he poured a cup of tea for the greasy fat man seated in front of him.

“Based on our ties, this is just a small matter. Every wood resource that passess through Yan City is connected to us. We dictate the amount supply taken in. What can one tiny Lin Family do?”

Lei Pi smiled as he nodded his head.

That fatty rubbed his glossy and chubby face, before he turned to look at Lei Pi and said: “Based on my knowledge, the Lin Family actually went to two places to sell items. Steel Wood was just one of them...”

“Oh?” After hearing these words, Lei Pi was stunned. When he saw the inscrutable smile on that fatty’s face, in flash of understanding, he immediately took out five pieces of Yang Yuan Stone and placed them before the fatty. With a smile, Lei Pi said: “This is for all your troubles, Manager Hua.”

“They were split into two teams. Lin Mang was selling Steel Wood while Lin Zhentian and the rest went to the other merchants. If my source is reliable, they sold a batch of Yang Yuan

Stones there.” The fatty smiled as he kept the Yang Yuan Stones in his sleeves before he finally replied.

“Haha, this is indeed peculiar. A small Lin Family could actually procure several hundred Yang Yuan Stones. I wonder how many years they have been collecting...”

“Several hundred Yang Yuan Stones?”

As he heard that fatty’s slightly unconvinced mutterings, Lei Pi’s expression slowly turned ugly.

Chapter 66: Spiritual Movement Chapter

Seated on horseback, Lin Dong involuntarily heaved a sigh of relief when he finally saw the manor appearing in his line of sight. Although bandits were not very rampant on the route from Qingyang Town to Yan City, outlaws could still be found here and there. He had frequently heard stories of merchants being robbed. Thankfully, since they had mobilized such a powerful force this time, they encountered little trouble.

As they returned with a bountiful harvest, cheers and applause slowly began to sound out in the manor. Lin Dong lept off his horse's back as he smiled at the red figure that was dashing towards him.

The red figure that was dashing towards him was naturally Little Flame. It intimately stroked its head against Lin Dong as it produced a deep purr.

Lin Dong smiled as he rubbed Little Flame. Then, he turned his sight to gaze at Qing Tan, who was slowly walking towards him. From his person, he took out a crystal-like bracelet and said: "A present for you."

"Thank you Lin Dong-ge" After she saw this unexpected gift, the young lady instantly squealed in delight before she immediately rushed over to receive the bracelet and sweetly thank her brother.

"Haha, it's getting late. Let's all head back and rest..." To one side, Lin Zhentian dismissed the convoy with a wave of his hand as

he smiled and said to the crowd.

Lin Dong chuckled before he turned to return home. On the journey back, he described the various differences and peculiarities of Yan City to the young lady beside him which caused her to occasionally let out clear sounds of excitement.

...

The dim light illuminated the neat and tidy room. Lin Dong sat on his bed with both of his eyes tightly shut. Simultaneously, he was practising “QingYuan Arts”, which caused in the Yuan Power between Heaven and Earth to visibly ripple as streams of Yuan Power began to slowly seep in through his unblocked inner channels before they were subsequently absorbed by his body.

This type of quiet training lasted for nearly an hour before Lin Dong gently opened his eyes. He then removed a jade bottle from within his Qian Kun bag. Contained within this bottle, were five light-red Elixir Pills. These were Yang Yuan Pills.

This time, the Lin Family had successfully sold three hundred pieces of Yang Yuan Stones, acquiring thirty-two Yang Yuan Pills. Under Lin Zhentian’s direction, Lin Dong had been bestowed five of these pills. After all, Lin Dong was the one who had discovered the mining lode, thus no one objected to this.

The rest of the Yang Yuan Pills were split between Lin Zhentian, Lin Xiao, Lin Mang and Lin Ken. The four of them were at Heavenly Yuan Stage, therefore, this kind of Yang Yuan Pills were

especially effective for them. If they took these pills regularly, it would definitely boost their training speed substantially.

Of course, despite so, some of the younger generation members in the Lin Family also obtained a few Yang Yuan Pills. For example, Lin Xia and Lin Hong both obtained one Yang Yuan Pill each. The current Lin Family was gradually becoming more powerful due to the existence of the mining lode. In the past, it would be unthinkable to hand over even a single Yang Yuan Pill to the younger generation.

“The quality of these Yang Yuan Pills cannot compare to those refined by the Stone Talisman...”

Lin Dong fiddled with a Yang Yuan Pill as his eyebrows slightly furrowed. He then took out the last Yang Yuan Pill refined by the Stone Talisman. Contrasting the two in his hands, the difference between their appearance and brightness was immediately apparent.

“It is said that one needs to be at Dan Yuan Stage before one is able to refine Yang Yuan Pills from Yang Yuan Stones. However, some powerful factions are able to use Symbol Arrays as a catalyst to lower the requirements, though the Yang Yuan Pills created would be at a lower grade. This must be how these Yang Yuan Pills were produced...” Lin Dong rolled Yang Yuan Pill between his fingers as he muttered thoughtfully to himself.

As he thought of these Symbol Arrays, a thought flashed through Lin Dong’s mind. He quickly retrieved the manual that the old man in grey had given him earlier today from his Qian Kun bag.

“Spiritual Movement Chapter.”

The name of that manual sounded rather impressive. However, after Lin Dong flipped through it, he realized that it was just a chapter on how to train Mental Energy and it seemed like only the first three parts were contained within this book. Nonetheless, this short manual was pretty valuable and he never expected that the old man would actually give away such a precious item during their first meeting.

Basically, Seal Masters were practitioners who utilize a different method of exerting Yuan Power. This method needed Mental Energy to propel Yuan Power.

Evidently, this “Spiritual Movement Chapter” was used to develop Mental Energy.

Lin Dong attentively flipped through this “Spiritual Movement Chapter”. After a long time, he started to nod his head gently. Simply put, the instructions written on this manual were very cryptic, however, for some reason, Lin Dong was able to comprehend it rapidly. This sensation was as if he possessed natural talent for training in these arts.

This discovery caused Lin Dong to become somewhat surprised. He could sense that this kind of talent was perhaps something that he was born with and not something given to him by an external force.

This was a talent that was a part of him, but was left undiscovered till now.

Lin Dong carefully kept the “Spiritual Movement Chapter” in his Qian Kun bag. Hesitating for a moment before he slowly shut his eyes, directing his five senses towards the heavens, eyes to nose, nose to heart.

“Spirit is split into Ying and Yang, Spiritual Movement begins with Life...”

As Lin Dong began to recite this mysterious chant in his heart, his thoughts gradually condensed together. Like a statue, he continued in this state for nearly half an hour before his Mental Energy was suddenly dazzled as bit by bit, his Mental Energy began to seep out from his mind and slowly spread itself.

As his Mental Energy slowly extended, even though Lin Dong’s eyes were tightly shut, he could clearly “see” his the interior of the room. Then, his vision once again expanded and he found his formless Mental Energy floating in the sky as every movement in nearly half of the entire manor was reflected clearly in his mind.

Mental Energy was able to penetrate through every surface and most people were oblivious with regards to the existence of this formless Mental Energy. Therefore, many of them did not know that their every movement was being spied on now.

This magical scene was a totally new and exciting experience for Lin Dong. Compared to Yuan Power, Mental Energy was faintly

discernable like mist, however this form of energy truly existed.

Lin Zhentian sat peacefully in one of the rooms in the manor as streams of Yuan Power continuously rushed into his body. However, he did not remain in this calm state for long as both of his eyes suddenly opened. With a vicious glare, he stared at the air in front of him and shouted in a stern voice: “I don’t know who you are, but why are you spying on my Lin Family!”

After Lin Zhentian shouted, a powerful Yuan Power undulated as it burst out of his body and violently clashed with the air in front of him.

“Bang!”

After that formless collision, an extremely soft echo sounded out before it was once again returned to nothingness. At this point, a serious look surfaced on Lin Zhentian’s face. The power he had sensed from before should be Mental Energy belonging to a Seal Master. However... since when did his Lin Family offend a Seal Master? Could he be sent by the Lei Family?

Just as Lin Zhentian’s facial expression darkened, in a distant room, Lin Dong’s eyes suddenly opened. Even though his face was pale, a look of delight and excitement danced in his eyes.

Chapter 67: Ominous Clouds

There was no doubt that the Lin Family's first successful sale of the Yang Yuan Stones had benefited them tremendously. The enormous profits earned was truly jaw-dropping. After all, when they exchanged an entire huge batch of Steel Wood, they only managed to get around twenty Yang Yuan Stones, an amount that was merely equivalent to one day's work at the mining lode.

It was completely impossible to compare the two of them.

Due to this reason, ever since they successfully sold their first batch of Yang Yuan Stones, Lin Zhentian mobilized nearly seventy to eighty percent of the Lin Family's manpower to the Steel Wood Manor. From the outside, it seemed like he was intending to operate this Steel Wood Manor as a major enterprise.

The strange movements by the Lin Family naturally drew many peculiar gazes. Even though the Steel Wood Manor was rich in Steel Wood, everyone knew that during the handover, the Lei Family had devastated a large portion of the soil. Therefore, in the eyes of many people, the Steel Wood Manor had already lost most of its value. However, right now, instead of neglecting the Steel Wood Manor, the Lin Family chose to treat it as a big business. It gave off the impression that the Lin Family was focusing too much on the minor details and neglecting the big picture.

However, despite all these speculations, the Lin Family chose to remain silent. They did not explain nor announce anything to any outsiders. Furthermore, they were able to keep a tight lid on information, thus nobody outside of the Lin Family knew what

they were up to...

Of course, despite their best efforts, they were naturally some exceptions...

...

Qingyang Town, Lei Family.

In a large hall deep within the Lei Family's compound, a dozen or so core Lei Family members were seated. Naturally, at the front, was the head of the Lei Family, Lei Bao. However, right now his face was dark as if it was akin to the foreboding calm before of the storm, causing everyone around him to be extremely cautious, afraid of enraging him.

“Father, the information that I heard is definitely accurate. On the surface, the reason why the Lin Family's travelled to Yan City was to sell Steel Wood. However, their real motive was to sell off several hundred pieces of Yang Yuan Stone. Even though the Lin Family had grown over these years, this amount of resources was something that even our Lei Family could not easily obtain. How could the weak Lin Family accomplish this?” Positioned on the left of Lei Bao, Lei Pi said with a bitter expression.

“What are you trying to say?” After he heard about the quantity of Yang Yuan Stones, Lei Bao's eyes twitched a little before he quickly questioned.

“During this period of time, surely everyone has noticed the strange behavior of the Lin Family. We are the most clear on the current value of the Steel Wood Manor. If Lin Zhentian is doing so much purely for a devastated manor, then he has probably gone senile with age...” Lei Pi’s eyes circled around the hall as he replied in a low voice.

After they heard his words, the rest of the crowd slightly nodded their heads in agreement. A long time ago, Lin Zhentian had come to this town alone and almost single handedly developed the Lin Family to what it was today with his wits and craftiness. Nobody believed that he would attempt such a fruitless endeavour.

In that case, since a pointless move, there must be more to this than meets the eye. When they recalled the first batch of Yang Yuan Stones that the Lin Family had just sold, many people’s facial expression instantly turned a little distorted.

“If my prediction is correct, the Lin Family should have found another natural resource in the Steel Wood Manor besides Steel Wood. And this natural resource is very likely a Yang Yuan Stone mining lode.”

Lei Pi’s words was undoubtedly earth-shattering, causing the entire hall to immediately turned deathly silent. A long while later, somebody shouted out in disbelief: “How is that possible? We have operated the Steel Wood Manor for so many years and we have never ever heard of any Yang Yuan Stone mining lode!”

“We had never properly scout the whole area.”

Lei Pi's face tightened as he stared at Lei Bao who was in the head's seat. After taking in a deep breath, he said: "Father, it seems like we have handed over an invaluable manor to the Lin Family."

"Bang!"

The teacup in Lei Bao's hand was crushed into dust as tea flowed through his fingers. His old and wrinkled face seemed exceptionally twisted and hideous now.

Yang Yuan Stone mining lode, these five simple words caused a major turmoil within Lei Bao's heart. He was aware of the value of these mining lodes. If the Steel Wood Manor really possessed a Yang Yuan Stone mining lode, then even if it was a small one, its value easily eclipsed that of the entire Steel Wood Manor!

Right now, they had handed over such a invaluable mining lode to the Lin Family. Before this, they were still gloating about how the Lin Family had received a manor that had been more than half wrecked. Now, as they recall this scene, all of their gloating seemed completely ridiculous.

As they stared at Lei Bao's hideous facial expression, everyone tactically turned silent, not daring to speak.

"During this period of time, send out every informant and spy that we have and utilize every means to get information on the Steel Wood Manor. I want to confirm if there really is a Yang Yuan Stone mining lode there!"

After taking a deep breath, Lei Bao's facial expression slowly returned normal. However, the tone of his voice was icy-cold, like a blizzard in the twelfth lunar month.

"In addition, I want to monitor every movement made by the Lin Family. If they travel to Yan City again, inform me immediately!"

"Yes!"

After hearing his command, the core members of the Lei Family immediately responded with respectful tones. Then, they exchanged knowing glances with each other and without further ado, they slowly left the meeting hall.

As the crowd of people exited, the large hall once again lapsed into silence. With a cold expression on his face, Lei Bao sat on his chair. A long while later, a vicious murmur suddenly sounded out.

"Lin Zhentian, since your Lin Family seeks death, don't blame my Lei Family for our vicious and merciless tactics!"

...

After they smoothly returned from Yan City, the central core in the Lin Family instantly shifted to the Yang Yuan Stone mining lode in the Steel Wood Manor. Since Lin Dong could not help out much, he spent the majority of his time training by his lonesome.

The current him was focusing on training three main aspects, Yuan Power, Martial Arts, and his newly acquired Mental Energy.

Now, Lin Dong's strength had stopped at Earthly Yuan Later Stage. At this juncture, it was likely that if once again forged ahead vigorously, he would be able to advance to Heavenly Yuan Stage. However, there exists a large gap between reality and one's expectation. Even though a month had past since Lin Dong returned from Yan City, his exceedingly hardworking and aid from Yang Yuan Pills brought him no closer to the now distant feeling of a breakthrough. This last tiny step felt like a monumental leap that completely obstructed him.

With regards to his lacklustre progress, Lin Dong felt helpless but he was not too anxious about it. After all, it was no simple feat to progress to Heavenly Yuan Stage, and many people had stalled at this step for years. Therefore, he knew that it was too optimistic to expect results after training for a mere month.

As for martial arts, Lin Dong was becoming increasingly masterful. The current him was already able to rather easily execute the second chapter of Wonder Gate Seal, incomplete volume. Furthermore, he was gradually becoming more proficient with the third chapter too. In fact, since he was at Earthly Yuan Later Stage, he finally able to start supplying the Yuan Power required for the Stone Talisman to perfect the third chapter of Wonder Gate Seal.

His Yuan Power and Martial Arts training were all progressing at a steady rate. The only exception was his Mental Energy training. In this short, short month, Lin Dong could distinctly sense the

formless Mental Energy within his mind throb and pulse and with each pulse, it grow increasingly violent. He had also successfully mastered the first part of the “Spiritual Movement Chapter”. Furthermore, this remarkable progress was just like a fish learning how to swim and came naturally to him without any external aid.

Towards this anomaly, even Lin Dong had no choice but to believe that he seemed to have some exceptional talent in Mental Energy.

Time silently slipped by as Lin Dong quietly trained. In a blink of an eye, two months had passed.

Just as that third month approached, a larger transportation crew than before was being assembled inside the Steel Wood Manor...

When there was movement in the Steel Wood Manor, news of this was carried by a little hummingbird to arrive on the shoulders of Lei Bao.

Lei Bao retrieved a tiny slip of paper from the humming bird. After he briefly scanned through it, the corners of his mouth slowly raised to form a vicious smile.

Chapter 68: Black Dragon Stockage

“It is inevitable that this journey will not go as smoothly as the previous one. Based on my sources, this batch of Yang Yuan Stones have attracted some hungry wolves...” In a large hall within the Steel Wood Manor, Lin Zhentian solemnly said with a serious look on his face as he gazed at Lin Xiao and the rest.

“Oh? Could it be that the Lei Family has decided to make their move?” After hearing his words, Lin Xiao and the rest’s facial expressions slightly changed.

“Heh, that cunning old fox Lei Bao will not make a move so lightly. Based on my information, the ones who are eyeing our current batch of Yang Yuan Stones should be from the “Black Dragon Stockage”.” Lin Zhentian chuckled grimly as he said.

“Black Dragon Stockage?”

Once this name entered their ears, even Lin Dong, who was standing beside, could not help but furrow his eyebrows. There were several bandit groups located within a thirty mile radius of Qingyang Town, and the “Black Dragon Stockage” was one of the most infamous among them. These group of bandits were reputed to be vicious and heartless and the two leaders in “Black Dragon Stockage” were reportedly at Heavenly Yuan Stage. Therefore, the duo’s names struck considerable fear throughout Qingyang Town.

“How does the Black Dragon Stockage know that we are transporting a large shipment of Yang Yuan Stones? They should

also know that our Lin Family are tough adversaries.” said Lin Xiao. In the past, their Lin Family had not crossed paths with these bandit groups. Why did the Black Dragon Stockage suddenly decide to target them?

“Heh heh, I suspect that the Lei Family may be involved in this matter. Our recent activities seemed to have aroused their suspicion...” Lin Zhentian chuckled as he replied.

“Father, so what you mean is that the Black Dragon Stockage is likely being urged on by the Lei Family?” To one side, Lin Ken and Lin Mang’s expressions darkened as they said.

“Based on my understanding Lei Bao, this is likely the case.”

Lin Zhentian lightly nodded his head, however, his gaze gradually turned chilly before he muttered: “I will personally take charge of this trip like before. Lin Xiao and Lin Mang will tag along while Lin Ken will stay to guard the Steel Wood Manor. I want to see for myself if this Black Dragon Stockage truly dares to make a move against my Lin Family!”

“Yes!” After hearing his commands, Lin Xiao and Lin Mang immediately responded.

“Dong-er, you should not follow us for this journey. Just stay still at Steel Wood Manor.” After finishing his instructions, Lin Zhentian told Lin Dong. A potentially big battle might break out during this trip and even though the current Lin Dong had the strength to protect himself, it would be safer for him to stay in the

Steel Wood Manor.

Upon hearing Lin Zhentian's instructions, Lin Dong could only nod his head.

“Time is of the essence, I want the two of you to immediately gather up the rest of the forces!”

“Yes!”

Lin Xiao and Lin Mang nodded their heads again before they stood up and left. Soon after, rumbling sounds of horses hooves could be heard. The low echos sounded akin to the arrival of a thunderstorm.

...

Atop the manor wall, Lin Dong gazed at that massive entourage leaving the manor. Under the watchful eyes of the guards, a flurry of yellow dust was stirred up as they sped towards the main road.

“I hope that you will all return safe and sound.”

Lin Dong gently sighed. He could feel the tensed atmosphere in his Lin Family. Due to that tension, even the younger generation members became more solemn.

“Fear not, with Grandpa personally leading the way, I doubt that

Black Dragon Stockage will dare to attack them!” As if he knew his nephew’s worries, to one side, Lin Ken smiled as he consoled Lin Dong.

“Yes.”

“Today, Lin Xia and Lin Hong are both at the Steel Wood Manor. You should go and play with them. Don’t worry about these matters, the adults will take care of them.” Lin Ken patted Lin Dong’s shoulder before he turned and instructed: “I want everyone to be on high alert. Even if it might just be the wind blowing a blade of grass, sound the alarm immediately! Under no circumstances do you let allow any suspicious-looking persons into the premises!”

“Yes sir!”

After Lin Ken shouted his orders, several replies from the crowd on the tall manor walls sounded out in response. As the sparkling rays of the sunlight shined downwards, the entire manor went into high-alert.

Lin Dong lept off the manor wall, before he walked to a training arena within the manor. There, were Lin Xia, Lin Hong and other younger generation members while some of them were currently dueling with each other.

“Lin Dong-ge.”

As they saw Lin Dong walk over, everyone straightened their waist as they excitedly greeted him. Right now, Lin Dong held a significant status in their hearts.

“Humph, you are really impressive now.” In front of Lin Dong, Lin Xia stood with her hands on her slim waist as she pouted and said.

“Lin Xia-jie, please don’t tease me.” As he looked at the elegant young lady before him, Lin Dong helpless replied with a pained smile.

“Heh.” As she saw Lin Dong’s reaction, Lin Xia involuntarily laughed. Then she waved her snow-white tiny hands and proceeded to seat herself on a rock nearby before she continued: “Alright, alright. I won’t tease you anymore. Do you think Grandpa and the rest will encounter much trouble this time?”

As she finished her question, a look of anxiety surfaced on the young lady’s cheeks. She could definitely feel the tense atmosphere in the manor and even though she had always been living under the protection of the family, she clearly knew how vicious these power struggles could be.

Lin Zhentian and the rest were the backbone of their Lin Family. If anything happened to them, this family would definitely fall apart. At that time, it would be difficult for them to seek even the slightest bit of peace.

“Don’t worry, it’s going to be fine.”

Lin Dong sighed in his heart. He stared at the anxious faces on Lin Xia and the rest of the younger generation members and involuntarily bit his lips. If the current Lin Family possessed a Yuan Dan practitioner, they would definitely not have these worries. Simply put, true power was still the most secure currency.

After she heard Lin Dong's comforting words, Lin Xia's complexion became slightly better. Promptly, she began to tell Lin Dong about some of the events that had occurred in Qingyang Town recently.

After they chatted merrily for quite a while, Lin Hong, who was nearby, suddenly walked over. He looked at Lin Dong and hesitated for a moment, before he finally said: "Lin Dong biao-di, when I was practising a martial arts, I ran into some difficulties. Do you think you could help me out?"

After hearing his request, both Lin Dong and Lin Xia were stunned as they looked at Lin Hong in disbelief. This fellow had always been a prideful individual, therefore they did not expect him to take the initiative and ask Lin Dong for help.

"Of course, we are one family. Helping each other is only natural." Just as Lin Xia was worried that Lin Dong may reject Lin Hong because of their history, Lin Dong smiled as he gently nodded his head.

Upon hearing Lin Dong's good-natured reply, Lin Hong was also slightly taken aback as his face turned red. He was evidently

ashamed about his childish acts in the past.

“Lin Hong biao-ge, display the martial arts that you are practising now.”

Lin Hong hurriedly nodded his head. Taking a step back, he had just positioned himself into fight stance when the seated Lin Dong suddenly stood up. Just moments ago, he was wearing a bright smile, but now his face has turned dark and fearsome.

“Lin Dong, what’s the matter?” As she saw his sudden change, to one side, Lin Xia was also shocked as she asked.

“Trouble...”

Lin Dong sucked in a deep breath. Without bothering to explain, he immediately turned and swiftly ran towards the entrance of the manor, before finally jumping onto the manor wall. As he stared into the far horizon, he could see that at the end of that large road, a huge storm of yellow dust was suddenly swept up. Thunderous sounds of horse hooves spread out like a wave towards them.

“What is that?”

Behind him, Lin Xia, Lin Hong, and even Qing Tan followed. However, as they stared at that yellow dust storm, a look of alarm immediately flashed on their faces.

“It’s the men from Black Dragon Stockage. We have been tricked.

Their target was not the Yang Yuan Stones that Grandpa was delivering but rather... the Steel Wood Manor!”

To one side, Lin Dong had a dark look on his face as he clenched his fists so tightly that crunching sounds could be heard. This time, if things were not managed well, their Lin Family would suffer tremendously!

Chapter 69: Calamity

On the manor walls: when Lin Xia and the rest heard Lin Dong's words, their expressions turned white as sheet. Currently, most of the experts in the Lin Family were out protecting the shipment. With Lin Ken left as the only Heavenly Yuan Stage practitioner in the Steel Wood Manor, how could they possibly fend off the Black Dragon Stockade?

Just as panic set into their hearts, Lin Ken swiftly dashed up to the Manor's wall. As he stared at that menacing yellow dust cloud, his eyes twitched and he promptly commanded: "Everyone, full alert!"

"Swish swish!"

After they heard Lin Ken's orders, everyone in the manor instantly went into emergency mode. Some of the guards left in the manor immediately drew their weapons and hastily ascended onto the manor's wall, staring nervously at the approaching dust cloud.

As the yellow dust cloud approached, a black banner vividly appeared in front of everyone's line of sight. Revealing the picture of a menacing and murderous giant black dragon.

"It's indeed the bandits from Black Dragon stockade!"

Upon seeing the banner, Lin Dong and the rest involuntarily clenched their fists.

“Looks like we have fallen into their trap. It is likely that the information Father received was deliberately leaked by the Black Dragon stockade with the intention of causing our Lin Family to dispatch a large amount of skilled members to protect our cargo. Meanwhile, they planned to attack our now vulnerable Steel Wood Manor!” Lin Ken said with a heavy voice.

“What should we do now?” Lin Dong asked. It seemed like many of the bandits from Black Dragon stockade had come. Could the guards in the Steel Wood Manor manage to hold them off?

“I have already sent word to the Raging Blade Dojo. We only need to hold them off for a while before reinforcements will arrive.” Lin Ken replied.

After hearing these words, Lin Dong softly heaved a sigh of relief. It seemed like the Lin Family was not completely unprepared.

“Haha, Lin Ken. It was not easy for us to finally meet each other, surely you won’t turn me away now?” Just as Lin Dong sighed, the sounds of horses hooves gradually died down as the yellow dust cloud slowly began to settle. A hearty laughter rang out as two black horses stepped forward. Seated on the horses’ backs, were two people.

The person on the left, was huge and muscular. His had the back of a tiger and the waist of a bear, yet a simple and honest smile hung on his face. Only people who were close to him knew that he was a despicable and vicious person. Truly worthy of his infamous

title as the “Vicious Wind Ripper” Wu Sha.

The other person looked comparatively smaller and leaner. He did not have any unique facial features except the numerous blade scars that filled his face. This man was the real leader of the Black Dragon stockade, Yan Kuo.

The duo’s horses strode forward and behind them stood hundreds of bandits from the Black Dragon stockade. Right now, they were slowly spreading themselves out. Their sabers and blades gleamed with a cruel and menacing light. Meanwhile, a tense atmosphere of a looming major battle shrouded the Steel Wood Manor.

“Yan Kuo and Wu Sha. Both leaders of the Black Strong stockade have arrived.” As he gazed at the two of them, Lin Ken’s heart sunk. The two of them were true blue Heavenly Yuan Stage experts. In particular, Yan Kuo had advanced to Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage, the same level Lin Ken was at.

“Yan Kuo, Wu Sha. Our Lin Family and your Black Dragon stockade have never crossed paths. Aren’t you people being too overbearing today?” Lin Ken shouted while waving his hand, signalling the guards standing at the perimeter of the manor as they immediately armed and readied their bows.

“Heh heh, the two of us have heard that there was a great treasure hidden in this place. Therefore, we decided to check it out for ourselves. Brother Lin Ken, why must you be so nervous?” The lean Yan Kuo casually smiled as he answered.

“If you make a move against our Lin Family, your Black Dragon stockade will definitely regret it.” Lin Ken’s face instantly took on a sinister look. Right now, his Lin Family had four Heavenly Yuan Stage practitioners, hence if they really wanted to exterminate the Black Dragon stockade, it would not be an impossible feat.

“Humans will die for money, just like animals will kill for food. Bandits like us are always prepared to die at any moment. I know that your Lin Family is not weak. Heh heh, however if you exterminate us, someone else will naturally finish you off. No matter what, our Black Dragon stockade will loot clean your Steel Wood Manor today!”

Yan Kuo released a weird laughter as he suddenly drew a huge saber that was strapped on his horse. Then, he kicked his horse and abruptly dashed forward. A thick Yuan Power gathered on his giant saber as he swung it towards the Steel Wood Manor’s huge entrance.

Lin Ken was enraged by Yan Kuo’s unreasonable manner. The former randomly grabbed a spear as his body zipped through the air to intercept Yan Kuo.

“Clang clang clang!”

Sparks violently burst out in the mid air as a powerful explosive force spread out at the epicenter. Finally, the two of them were forcefully pushed back.

“Haha, wonderful! However Lin Ken, you are the only Heavenly Yuan Stage practitioner left in the Steel Wood Manor today. You may be able to obstruct me, but you cannot stop everyone else at the same time. Wu Sha, lead the rest of the men in!” Yan Kuo exclaimed as he straightened himself on horseback. With a weird laughter, he forcefully thrust his feet downwards. Resulting in a powerful impact that caused the horse’s hooves to shatter instantly as it neighed before falling on the floor with a thud.

“Haha, good! Brothers, follow me and charge!”

In response to Yan Kuo’s words, Wu Sha’s lips split open as he let out a hearty laugh. With a wave of his huge hand, he immediately took the lead and led the forces from the Black Dragon stockade as they ferociously charged towards the Steel Wood Manor.

“All Lin Family guards, attack!”

After witnessing this situation, a murderous intent flowed in Lin Ken’s eyes as he sternly shouted.

“Swoosh, swoosh, swoosh!”

Atop the manor walls, many of the Lin Family guards began to let loose their arrows. Sounds of arrows piercing through the wind sounded out as they flew towards the Black Dragon stockade bandits. Instantly painful cries followed.

The smell of blood slowly began to seep throughout the Steel

Wood Manor. Upon seeing these murderous Black Dragon stockade bandits charge at them with no regards for their own lives, the younger generation members turned pale. Evidently, this was their first time witnessing such a scene.

In contrast, an extraordinary Lin Dong seemed pretty calm when faced with this situation. All the training that he did during this period was very effective. Such bloody battles no longer caused him to feel any unease.

As she gazed at the approaching Black Dragon stockade bandits, Lin Xia involuntarily gripped onto Lin Dong's arm. Right now, he had become her pillar of support.

“When the Black Dragon stockade bandits rush in, everyone must take care. Qing Tan, I want you protect them together with Little Flame.” Lin Dong said in a low voice.

Upon hearing these words, Qing Tan, who was standing beside him, gently bit her lips as she nodded. Currently, she was the fastest person that had advance to Earthly Yuan Stage after Lin Dong. Furthermore, Lin Dong had personally taught her an array of martial arts. Therefore, discounting Lin Dong, she was definitely the strongest younger generation member.

As Lin Dong quickly instructed them, the Black Dragon stockade bandits had already reached the point just outside of the Steel Wood Manor's front entrance. Seeing this situation, Lin Ken's face turned pale and he quickly maneuvered to try and intervene but a sudden powerful attack was directed towards him, causing him to hastily retreat two steps.

“Heh, Lin Ken. Now its time for us to duel!” The person that had dashed up the manor walls was naturally Yan Kuo. With a smirk, Yuan Power gushed up the giant saber in his hand as he swung it at Lin Ken, causing him to be unable to do anything else.

“Bang!”

Outside the manor’s front door, Wu Yun also jumped upwards, a vigorous Yuan Power burst out and undulated on his giant palms. Like a thousand pound rock, they slammed heavily on the thick door.

“Crack!”

The giant door fell, the Steel Wood Manor’s front entrance was directly broken with one palm from Wu Sha. Instantly, the Black Dragon stockade bandits flooded into the manor like a tide.

“Attack!”

Upon seeing the bandits burst into their manor, the head guard of the Lin Family immediately shouted out.

“Heh!”

However, just as the shouted rang out, a muscular figure immediately dashed towards them. Wu Sha’s callous smile rapidly

enlarged in their eyes as a palm attack was finally directed towards them, causing them to all fly back, violently spitting out blood.

With Wu Sha's Heavenly Yuan Stage strength, he rampaged among them like a wolf in a flock of sheep. Because of this fact, the morale of the Black Dragon stockade bandits rose as they dashed, eyes full of battle lust, towards the surrounding Lin Family guards.

“Haha, a bunch of useless morons think they can stop us? This Lin Family is nothing!”

Wu Sha cruelly wounded several guards and arrogantly laughed, a look of disdain on his face.

“What should we do? What should we do? That fellow is too strong. With Father stuck in his own battle, there is no one left to stop Wu Sha!”

As the sight of Wu Sha easily ripping through the guards filled their eyes, Lin Xia and the rest turned pale. Just as she finished her words, she could abruptly sensed a figure beside her swiftly dash forward and his target was actually Wu Sha!

“Lin Dong!”

As they stared at that young man's back, Lin Xia and the others uttered in shock. At this moment, even though he was being held down by Yan Kuo, Lin Ken's expression also changed drastically!

Chapter 70: Mind-blowing

“Bang!”

Vigorous Yuan Power burst out from within Wu Sha's body as he thrust out his palm, causing the Lin Family guard before him to spit out a mouthful of blood, while being thrown backwards. Wu Sha once again laughed maliciously as he lifted his leg and ferociously stomped down at another terrified guard's head. If this attack went through, the guard's brains would be splattered on the spot.

“Swoosh!”

However, just as Wu Sha was moments away from stomping down, a whistling noise suddenly sounded out. His hand quickly moved as he caught the broken spear that came hurtling towards him. Wu Sha lifted his head, only to see a thin figure of a youngster calmly standing at a distance away. That boy's eyes were tightly locked onto Wu Sha.

“Heh heh, this Lin Family is truly pathetic. To think that they'd send a brat who is still wet behind the ears. Did they think that I would be merciful towards children?” Casually tossing aside the broken spear, Wu Sha kicked away the guard at his feet before he turned and smiled maliciously at Lin Dong.

“Young master Lin Dong!”

The surrounding Lin Family guards hastily shouted out upon

seeing this scene. Qin Ying, who had accompanied Lin Dong several times, swiftly charged forward with some men to stand in front of Lin Dong, and block Wu Sha away from him .

“Leave quickly young master Lin Dong, Wu Sha is at Heavenly Yuan Early Stage, we will not be able to hold him off for long!”

A small smile formed on Lin Dong’s lips as he looked at the Lin Family Guards in front of him. They were willing to risk their lives to ensure his safety. Yet, he did not comply with Qin Ying’s words. Instead, he stepped forward and said: “Uncle Qin Ying, bring your men to deal with the other Black Dragon Stockade bandits. I will stop Wu Sha.”

Upon hearing these words, Qin Ying and the rest of the Lin Family guards immediately turned pale with fright. Though they wanted to try and dissuade him, they suddenly saw waves of vigorous Yuan Power start to bubble forth from within Lin Dong’s body.

“Earthly Yuan Late Stage!”

As they felt this vigorous Yuan Power, Qin Ying and the rest were once again shocked. They never thought that Lin Dong had actually managed to reach this stage in less than a year.

“Don’t worry, I won’t intentionally seek my own demise...”

Lin Dong smiled at Qin Ying and the rest, then, without further

ado, he strode forward and stopped right in front of that big and burly Wu Sha.

It was definitely not easy to advance from Earthly Yuan Stage to Heavenly Yuan Stage. Even after three months of tough training, Lin Dong had yet to feel any signs of a breakthrough.

However, although he had not reached Heavenly Yuan Stage, it did not mean that Lin Dong was completely powerless before Wu Sha, even though the latter was already at Heavenly Yuan Early Stage. That was because Lin Dong had absorbed the special Yin Energy from Qing Tan's body, hence the Yuan Power in his body was incomparable to a normal person's. Together with his proficiency in martial arts, matching up against a Heavenly Yuan Early Stage expert was not an impossible feat.

“Earthly Yuan Late Stage?”

Astonishment flashed across Wu Sha's sinister face, as he gazed at the youngster before him. He never expected that this youngster in front of him could advance to such a level. It seems like a genius was unexpectedly hidden within this Lin Family.

“According to this brat's growth, it would only take one or two years at most for him to reach Heavenly Yuan Stage. It is also possible that he might even become a Yuan Dan practitioner in the future...” A malicious glint flickered in Wu Sha's eyes as a murderous intent gushed in his heart. Since the Black Dragon Stockade completely turned the Lin Family into their enemies today, if the Lin Family produced a Yuan Dan Stage practitioner in the future, it would undoubtedly be a disaster for them.

It would be best to eliminate the possibility of such a disaster as soon as possible.

With these thoughts in mind, the sinister look on Wu Sha's face turned even uglier. He looked at Lin Dong with a grotesque smile as he muttered: "Though I've killed many people, I have yet to try killing a genius like you. I wonder what it will feel like?"

"Bang!"

Barely after these words left his mouth, Wu Sha's body violently charged forward. Vigorous Yuan Power condensed in the hollow of his palm as he ferociously swiped at Lin Dong.

"Chun Yuan Finger!"

Faced with Wu Sha's attack, Lin Dong's expression turned serious as the Yuan Power in his Dan Tian rapidly converged. Finally, his two fingers slightly curled and like a resplendent ray of light, they forcefully jabbed towards Wu Sha's palm.

"Bang!"

Finger and palm clashed together, emitting a wave of Yuan Power which spread out like a ripple, blowing the crushed and broken rocks on the ground away.

“Deng deng!”

Though the contact only lasted a split second, Lin Dong rapidly took a few steps backwards before forcefully stabilizing himself. On the other hand, Wu Sha was only pushed half a step back. The superiority of Heavenly Yuan Stage was clear as day.

“There’s something weird about this brat!”

Though he was only forced to take half a step back, Wu Sha’s expression gradually turned somewhat worried. In the brief exchange earlier, he had distinctly felt an extremely cold Yin presence within the other party’s Yuan Power. That thread of cold Yin had penetrated into his body, corroding it from within. If he had not already assimilated Yang Energy in his body, Wu Sha would have been caught unprepared and end up slightly disadvantaged.

“Something unexpected may happen if I wait, it’s best to finish him off immediately!”

An icy light flashed in Wu Sha’s eyes, his already huge hands unexpectedly expanded as Vigorous Yuan Power swiftly bubbled out. Then, the sole of his foot pushed off the ground, the strong force directly causing a crack to form on the ground, as his body borrowed the resulting momentum to arrive in front of Lin Dong in a flash!

“Wind Ripping Hand!”

Wu Sha's massive body practically eclipsed Lin Dong as the dreadful power in the former's right palm abruptly exploded forth. In that instance, it was as if the air had been ripped into two. The sharp sonic boom spread out with a "wu wu" sound, causing the surrounding onlookers' expression to change drastically.

The ear-piercing sound reverberated in Lin Dong's eardrum. At this moment, he sensed extreme danger. Both his eyes were glued onto the palm that was rapidly enlarging as he frantically pulled out the Yuan Power that was stored in his Dan Tian and directed it towards both his palms.

In response to Lin Dong's frantic actions, the Yuan Power in his Dan Tian was quickly exhausted.

"It's not enough!"

Upon sensing this, a slight madness crept into Lin Dong's eyes as he gritted his teeth and let loose a low roar in his heart. The two Yang Yuan Pills which were previously hidden beneath his tongue were straightaway swallowed into his body

As the two Yang Yuan Pills entered into his body, a pure medicine power speedily proliferated throughout his body. At the same time, Lin Dong also increased the output of QingYuan Art to continuously absorb the Yuan Power between Heaven and Earth.

With this two pronged approach, the undulating Yuan Power at Lin Dong's palms grew more and more violent as his hands quickly formed a series of seals in succession.

Wonder Gate Seal First Chapter, Second Chapter!

When the seals reached the Second Chapter, a fierce look flashed across Lin Dong's eyes. Without stopping, the seals once again continued to change!

“Die brat!”

The dreadful force contained within the palm had almost reached Lin Dong. In that instance, Lin Dong also lifted his head, as the changing seals came to a halt. Then, his hands maintained a mysterious seal position as they generated an exceptionally vigorous Yuan Power to forcefully clash against Wu Sha's palm, under the horror and amazement of the surrounding onlookers.

Wonder Gate Seal, Third Chapter!

“Lin Dong!”

Nearby, Lin Xia and the rest shrieked as they saw this scene, their faces deathly white.

“Bang!”

A screech rang out as a powerful gale originated from their point of contact, causing a layer of broken rocks to be forcefully swept up and violently shot outwards.

Such a violent clash straightaway caused the entire chaotic scene to lapse into silence. Even the intense battle between Lin Ken and Yan Kuo on the manor wall came to a halt, as each party withdrew a few steps back and turned their gazes towards the commotion.

“Boom!”

As their gazes darted over, a figure was suddenly thrown backwards out of the dust cloud before heavily crashing to the ground, smearing an unsightly trail of blood in his path.

“Heh!”

A mouthful of blood sprayed out from the figure’s mouth as he landed on the ground. Everyone’s gazes instantly concentrated on his body, the entire chaotic scene turning deathly still in that moment. Disbelief coloured their eyes.

This was because the seriously injured and hideous person lying on the ground was not Lin Dong, but rather the second in command of the Black Dragon Stockade, Wu Sha!

Qingyang Town’s infamous Heavenly Yuan Stage expert had unexpectedly lost to Lin Dong!

One could do nothing but admit that this outcome was way too mind-blowing!

Chapter 71: Breakthrough!

In that moment, the chaos in the manor transformed into an unusual silence as shocked gazes continuously swept between the two figures at the scene.

Wu Sha had lost. Furthermore, it was to a fifteen or sixteen year old youngster!

As they gazed at Wu Sha who was lying on the ground while violently coughing out blood, it was a long time before they finally regained their wits as everyone started to believe in this hard to accept and incredulous fact.

“Young master Lin Dong...is goddamn awesome.”

Qin Ying and the rest of the Lin Family guards also let out a sigh, soon after, they could not help but let out a little foul language. They had never thought that this kind of outcome would occur. They had long ago heard of Wu Sha's infamous name, through the years, countless experts had died at his hand. However, this same man had just been defeated by Lin Dong!

“Gulp!”

Nearby, Lin Xia and the rest likewise swallowed. If Lin Dong had won their respect when he defeated Lei Li previously, this time, they would probably go fanatical over him.

To defeat an infamous Heavenly Yuan Stage expert at the age of sixteen, how was that even possible?

If word of such a matter were to spread, not mentioning Qingyang Town, Lin Dong's name would draw an uproar even in Yan City.

“Haha, good! good!”

Atop the manor wall, Lin Ken was in a daze for a good while before he abruptly burst out into a hearty laughter, completely unable to conceal how giddy with happiness he was. This scene had also astonished him so greatly that he had no words for it.

Compared to the Lin Ken's ecstasy, Yan Kuo's face turned exceedingly ugly. Given Wu Sha's strength, Yan Kuo could never have expected that the former would actually lose to one of the younger generation in the Lin Family

Under the gaze of the crowd, Lin Dong maintained the same hand seal posture from before. It was a long time later before his face flushed red as he immediately spat out a mouthful of fresh blood.

At the sight of blood spraying from Lin Dong's mouth, the Lin Family guards were greatly alarmed. They intended to step forward but suddenly found a strong and violent suction force abruptly appearing from within Lin Dong's body!

“Hu hu!”

The sudden appearance of this strong suction force caused the Yuan Power between Heaven and Earth to rapidly gather around Lin Dong's body till that vigorous Yuan Power actually took the form of a whirlpool of Yuan Power that could be seen with the naked eye. The whirlpool spun around Lin Dong's body before finally pouring into his body through the opened channels.

This scene caused many people to be astonished. Even Lin Ken, who was atop the manor walls, was likewise stunned. However, shortly after, he could sense that there was actually a trace of Yang Energy contained within the whirlpool of Yuan Power that engulfed Lin Dong's body!

As he sensed this, Lin Ken's face instantly flushed red. a hue of red that indicated that he was at the pinnacle of excitement!

“Yang Energy entering the body! This is the sign of stepping into the Heavenly Yuan Stage!”

His heart throbbed frantically in his chest, Lin Ken felt somewhat dizzy from the startling news that followed. He could never have imagined this. Not only did Lin Dong defeat Wu Sha, he also borrowed the help of this fierce battle to gain the chance of a breakthrough!

If Lin Dong could successfully absorb the Yang Energy into his body, he would be able to truly advance to the Heavenly Yuan Stage. At that time, their Lin Family would have given birth to the youngest Heavenly Yuan expert in history!

“Qin Ying, bring everyone and protect Lin Dong!”

Flushed red, Lin Ken abruptly shouted. Lin Dong was currently in the process of making a breakthrough, thus he could not be disturbed. If anything happened to him at this point, Lin Ken was sure that when Lin Zhentian returned, he would go crazy with rage.

Upon hearing Lin Ken’s stern and urgent shout, Qin Ying and the rest quickly regained their wits. They exchanged a quick look with one another and as if they suddenly thought of something, they could not help but start trembling on the spot. Admiration filled them as Lin Dong’s figure was reflected in their eyes.

“Protect young master Lin Dong!”

Numerous Lin Family guards speedily formed a defensive perimeter around Lin Dong, surrounding him so tightly that even a drop of water could not trickle through.

“Whoever kills that brat will be promoted to become the 3rd in command of the Black Dragon Stockade!”

At this time, Yan Kuo had also regained his calm. A trace of fear flashed across his eyes before he shouted out in anger. Even a terrible man like him who had the blood of countless people on his hands felt a little dread at the talent the Lin Dong had displayed. If someone like him was allowed to grow, it would be a nightmare for them.

Yan Kuo's shout stunned the bandits from the Black Dragon Stockade. Though soon after, their eyes flared red. The path to such a bountiful reward would definitely be paved with deaths, however, people like them were originally desperate criminals who could be considered dead men!

“Attack!”

No one knew who shouted but all the men of the Black Dragon Stockade straightaway charged towards the mass of Lin Family guards who were protecting Lin Dong.

“Stop them!”

Qin Ying and the other leaders of the Lin Family guards similarly wore ferocious looks on their faces. They led the men behind them as they obstructed the Black Dragon Stockade bandits.

“Yan Kuo, in the future, our Lin Family is bound to hunt down every last member of your Black Dragon Stockade!” Lin Ken icily remarked as his body flashed forward to block Yan Kuo who had wanted to personally undertake the task of finishing Lin Dong off.

Upon hearing these words, Yan Kuo's face involuntarily twitched. At this very moment, he felt somewhat regretful in his heart. If he had known earlier what a pain the Lin Family would be, he would never have made a move on them.

“Humph, exterminating my Black Dragon Stockade? Let’s see if you have what it takes.”

No matter how much regret there was in his heart, events had already unfolded. Yan Kuo was also considered a person of character. He instantly let go of the regret in his heart and sneered as he once again pushed forward to face off against Lin Ken.

“Heh!”

The battle royal in the manor reached its climax, a thick stench of blood filled the air as men on both sides killed till their eyes turned red with frenzy. Sabres and swords hacked into bodies, emitting rather ear-piercing sounds.

...

“Bang!”

Two Earthly Yuan Middle Stage gang leaders of the Black Dragon Stockade joined hands as they pushed back Qin Ying with a punch, causing him to spit out a mouthful of blood while he retreated. They laughed maliciously as they turned their gazes towards the youngster who was standing in place without the slightest bit of movement.

“Stop them!”

Qin Ying wiped off the blood at the corner of his mouth as he

quickly shouted out upon seeing the two make a beeline for Lin Dong. However, at this time, all of the men on both sides were stuck in a bloody tangle, how could they possibly spare any men to help?

“Haha, looks like it’s our turn to take on the 3rd in command role in the Black Dragon Stockade!”

The two gang leaders from the Black Dragon Stockade urgently pressed forward and appeared in front of Lin Dong. With the flick of their wrists, sharp daggers slipped out from their sleeves before fiercely thrusting towards Lin Dong’s chest like a viper from its cave.

However, just as the duo’s daggers were mere centimeters from Lin Dong, the latter’s tightly shut eyes suddenly opened. At the same time, the Yuan Power whirlpool which was circling around his body violently scattered and heavily smashed against the two’s bodies.

“Eh!”

Two figures fell backwards with a grunt, spurting blood from their mouths before finally falling back into the crowd.

The wave of Yuan Power that suddenly burst forth once again caused the chaotic scene to fall quiet. Immediately, gazes turned to look at Lin Dong, particularly to sense the vigorous energy that emanated from him as the expressions of the men on both sides changed dramatically.

“Is this Heavenly Yuan stage...”

Lin Dong ignored their gazes and deeply sighed as he felt the vigorous Yuan Power in his Dan Tian that had grown several times stronger compared to before. Unable to control himself, the corners of his mouth lifted to form a happy smile. This long awaited day had finally arrived!

Chapter 72: Pushing back the Enemy

“We did it...”

Atop the manor wall, Lin Ken looked at Lin Dong, whose strength had now increased by many fold. Right now, a wild grin lit up his face.

Compared to Lin Dong’s delight, Yan Kuo’s face was extremely ugly. He never expected that the originally favourable situation had now swiftly reversed itself!

The one who caused all these changes was the youth from the Lin Family!

...

“It’s time to test out the strength of Heavenly Yuan Stage...”

While Yan Kuo was still wearing an ugly expression on his face, Lin Dong, who had successfully broke through to Heavenly Yuan Stage, lightly stretched his body as he glanced maliciously at the bandits from the Black Dragon Stockade.

Upon seeing Lin Dong look over, the original fearsome looking bandits immediately panicked as they hastily retreated. After all, they were keenly aware that they could not match up to a Heavenly Yuan Stage practitioner.

“Bang!”

However, Lin Dong did not give them much time, he casually picked up a black steel rod from the floor as a powerful Yuan Force exploded forth. Like a wolf running into a sheep pen, he dashed into the crowd of bandits, swinging his metal rod, causing “wu wu” sounds of the rod ripping through the air. Anyone who was hit by his rod was immediately blown back as they spat out mouthfuls of blood.

At Lin Dong’s display of prowess, the Lin Family guards’ morale were greatly boosted. They brandished their weapons as they leaped towards the bandits like a pack of jackals and wolves.

With Lin Dong leading the charge, the bandits, who were previously on the winning side, immediately fell apart. As they faced the counter-attack from the Lin Family, they steadily retreated, no longer as ferocious as before.

After seeing his troops being steadily pushed back, Yan Kuo’s face turned slightly ash-colored. He knew that today was a complete failure.

“Whee!”

While Yan Kuo was contemplating a retreat, a sharp whistle suddenly sounded out from nearby. Upon hearing this whistle, Yan Kuo’s facial expression changed again. Without the slightest hesitation, he immediately jumped off the manor’s wall and beat a hasty retreat.

“Retreat!”

After they heard Yan Kuo’s command, the already devastated bandits immediately flooded towards the exit. Finally, after abandoning a huge pile of corpses, they hastily fled from the Steel Wood Manor, their sorry figures desperately running back into the deep mountains.

Upon seeing the bandits in complete disarray, the morale of the Lin Family rose even higher. Just as some of them planned to chase down the bandits, Lin Ken waved his hand and commanded them to stop.

The Black Dragon Stockade bandits hastily retreated as the chaotic Steel Wood Manor gradually calmed down. However, the current Manor was a mess. Fresh blood was splattered all over the ground while the thick stench of blood floated in the air.

This time, the Black Dragon Stockade had brought along a huge army. Even though they were finally repelled, it was clear that the Lin Family had also suffered some casualties.

Although there were some casualties, it was an inevitable loss. Therefore, when the Black Dragon Stockade bandits were completely repelled, a thunderous cheer sounded out in the manor.

“Bravo! Young master Lin Dong.”

Lin Dong smiled as he saw the fiery gazes of the Lin Family members around him. His tensed nerves gradually began to relax . Only then did he feel pangs of sharp pain emitted from within his body. Though he used Wonder Gate Seal Third Chapter to defeat Wu Sha in their earlier engagement, Lin Dong's body had also experienced a huge impact. If he did not have the good fortune to break through at the right moment, he might have suffered just as badly as Wu Sha.

“Lin Dong, are you alright?”

Lin Xia and the rest of the younger generation members swiftly crowded around him as they stared at Lin Dong with fanatical gazes. Even the usually prideful Lin Hong was now filled with respect for Lin Dong. Their blood was still boiling from when they had previously witnessed how Lin Dong managed to single-handedly turned the tables around.

“Haha, alright. It's time to let Lin Dong take a good rest.”

Just as Lin Dong was being swarmed by the crowd, Lin Ken released a hearty laugh. He walked towards the crowd and looked at Lin Dong before forcefully patting his shoulders and exclaiming: “Well done brat!”

Upon hearing these words, Lin Dong suddenly realized that he was at a loss for words. The Steel Wood Manor was truly on the brink of a crisis today. If they had made a single misstep, it would not only have hurt the Lin Family's strength tremendously, but also cause the Lin Family to lose prestige and honor.

However, at the most critical moment, Lin Dong gallantly stuck his neck forward and halted Wu Sha. Eventually, he even managed to breakthrough to Heavenly Yuan Stage, and completely devastate the Black Dragon Stockade bandits, thereby saving the Steel Wood Manor.

“This time, it’s all thanks to you...”

At Lin Ken’s words, Lin Dong scratched his head humbly as he replied with a chuckle: “No need for such compliments Uncle. It’s my duty after all. If the Lin Family is in danger, how can I be expected to just stand by? Lest my Father gives me a good beating when he returns.”

“Haha” Lin Ken laughed as he shook his head. After he spoke a little longer with Lin Dong, he turned and gave instructions to start cleaning up the manor.

“Boom boom!”

When Lin Ken started ordering people to begin cleaning up the manor, the rumbling of horse hooves suddenly sounded out. Instantly, the facial expressions of everyone in the manor changed. After the previous intense battle, everyone was now on high alert.

“No need to worry, it’s only reinforcements from Raging Blade Dojo!”

Lin Ken's gentle shout defused the tense atmosphere in the manor. Then, he brought Lin Dong and the rest and walked out the manor's front gate. As expected, they saw some familiar figures dashing towards them.

As the horses approached, Lin Dong also recognized the man leading the group. He was the head of Raging Blade Dojo, Luo Cheng.

"Brother Lin Ken, how is the manor? Once we got word, we immediately rushed over." When he saw Lin Ken and the rest walk out, Luo Cheng immediately heaved a sigh of relief as he asked.

"Heh heh, thanks for your concern Master Luo. This time, the Black Dragon Stockade decided to raid our manor, but thankfully we managed to repel them." Lin Ken smiled as he respectfully bowed.

"Oh? So it was really the bandits from Black Dragon Stockade." Upon hearing these words, Luo Cheng furrowed his eyebrows. Then, he asked: "So was it Yan Kuo or Wu Sha leading the troops?"

"Heh, both of the leaders came by." Lin Ken replied with a bitter smile.

Upon hearing these words, Luo Cheng was immediately taken aback. He knew that the current Steel Wood Manor only had one Heavenly Yuan Practitioner, Lin Ken. Did he manage to repel both Yan Kuo and Wu Sha on his own?

After he saw Luo Cheng's astonished look, Lin Ken also vaguely guessed the former's thoughts. With a smile, he nonchalantly said: "I'm not that capable. I merely held down Yan Kuo. As for Wu Sha, he was defeated by Lin Dong."

The news that Lin Dong had defeated Wu Sha could not be hidden. Thanks to Raging Blade Dojo's connections, they could easily find out what happened in the battle. Therefore, there was no need to hide it from them.

"Lin Dong?"

At these words, not only was Luo Cheng shocked, but several other attendants from the Raging Blade Dojo were also startled. A look of disbelief surfaced on their faces as they could not believe what they had just heard. After all, that Wu Sha was at Heavenly Yuan Stage!

Dazed, Luo Cheng immediately turned to look at Lin Dong. The former's eyes were extremely sharp and discerning, with a glance, he instantly noticed a difference and straightaway gasped.

"Heavenly Yuan Stage?!"

Luo Cheng's hands, which was holding onto the reins, trembled. Moments later, he slowly said: "The Lin Family is blessed."

Luo Cheng thoroughly understood just how much potential a sixteen year old Heavenly Yuan Stage practitioner had. Perhaps in

a few years time, the Lin Family would have a Yuan Dan Stage practitioner. At that time, they would be unparalleled in the whole Qingyang Town.

However, right now, even a man like Luo Cheng slightly rejoiced. After all, the Raging Blade Dojo and Lin Family had rather close ties. If not, he would be just like the Lei and Xie Families, worrying day and night!

Chapter 73: An Enraged Lin Zhentian

Even though the situation with the Black Dragon Stockade has been resolved, Lin Ken still invited the Raging Blade Dojo members into the manor as a show of hospitality. However, because the current Steel Wood Manor reeked of blood, it was unwise to stay for long. Therefore, Luo Cheng and the rest did not linger for too long. After a while, they took the initiative to say their farewells before taking off.

Likewise, Lin Ken did not try to stop Luo Cheng and the rest as they left,. Personally escorting them to the front gate, Lin Ken thanked them once again before bidding them goodbye.

...

After half a day of cleanup, the Steel Wood Manor was no longer as distraught as before. However, the smell of blood still lingered. In this confrontation, the Lin Family had also suffered several casualties. Thus, tying up the loose ends would not be easy.

As the sun gradually set, a large caravan once again appeared on the main road. When the guards on the manor wall saw the familiar fleet, they immediately exclaimed in delight.

“Haha, I never expected this trip to be so smooth sailing. It seems like the Black Dragon Stockade did not dare to make a move.” At the front of the convoy, Lin Mang gazed at the manor that appeared in his line of sight and involuntarily chuckled as he said.

To one side, Lin Xiao also smiled. Just as he was about to reply, his facial expression suddenly changed drastically. He had smelt the thick bloody smell lingering in the air.

“Something is wrong!”

When Lin Zhentian smelt the metallic tang of blood, he also reached the same conclusion. His aged face instantly turned incomparably ominous as he quickly whipped his horse and hurriedly dashed towards the Steel Wood Manor.

...

“Black Dragon Stockade! If I do not personally wipe all of you off the face of this Earth, I will no longer have any standing in this Qingyang Town!”

Within the Steel Wood Manor, some of the guards heard Lin Zhentian’s furious roar and involuntarily gulped in response. It seems like Lin Zhentian was truly enraged this time.

In the large hall, all the tables and furniture had already transformed to bit and pieces that littered the floor. Both Lin Mang and Lin Xiao’s were black faced as a vicious killing intent overflowed from their eyes. They finally understood why their trip had gone so smoothly: it was because the Black Dragon Stockade had directly attacked the manor!

“Father, we cannot treat this matter lightly. However, please

calm down for now. After all, Elder Brother managed to successfully defend the manor, denying the Black Dragon Stockade the chance to wreck it.” Lin Xiao took a deep breath as he advised in a low voice.

Lin Zhentian’s chest violently rose up and down for a while before he slowly sat down as his anger slightly subsided. Indeed, it seems like they had managed to avert a huge disaster.

“Lin Ken, you have done very well this time.”

Upon hearing Lin Zhentian’s complement, Lin Ken let out a bitter laugh. He abruptly pointed towards Lin Dong, who was sitting at a corner, and said: “Father, this time round, the credit does not solely belong to me. If Lin Dong had not managed to defeat Wu Sha, I am afraid that our Steel Wood Manor would have been doomed.”

“Defeat Wu Sha?”

After hearing these words, Lin Zhentian, Lin Xiao and the rest were all dazed, as if they could not understand what they had just heard.

“Father, congratulations. From now on, our Lin Family will have another Heavenly Yuan Stage expert.” Lin Ken gently smiled as he continued.

Silence, total silence.

The tense atmosphere from before, that was brought about by Lin Zhentian's anger, seemed to have frozen in place. The entire hall was in absolute silence.

“What... can you say that again?” Lin Zhentian had a ridiculous expression on his face as he stared at Lin Ken and muttered.

“Lin Dong has advanced to the Heavenly Yuan Stage.”

As he gazed at the utter disbelief on the trio's faces, Lin Ken felt rather helpless as he repeated his words.

“Sss!”

In the large hall, the three of them simultaneously sucked in a breath of cold air. Then, three pairs of eyes were instantly glued onto Lin Dong. Promptly, Lin Zhentian stood up and in a flash, he was appeared in front of Lin Dong. With a wrinkled yet firm hand, he grabbed onto Lin Dong's wrist.

As he grabbed Lin Dong's wrist, Lin Zhentian could clearly feel traces of Yang Energy contained within Lin Dong's Yuan Power. It was the defining mark of a Heavenly Yuan Stage Expert!

“Hahahaha, excellent! Excellent!”

An unrestrainable delight immediately exploded on Lin

Zhentian's wrinkled face. Eventually, he began to laugh maniacally. The previous gloomy mood that was caused by the Black Dragon Stockade incident had instantly turned light hearted again.

“Father, is this true?” Upon seeing Lin Zhentian's reaction, Lin Xiao and Lin Mang asked in astonishment.

“It's indeed Heavenly Yuan Stage!” Lin Zhentian suppressed the wild excitement in his heart as he solemnly nodded his head.

Observing Lin Zhentian and the rest's reactions, Lin Dong could only force a smile as he shook his head. Did they have to be so dramatic every time?

To one side, Lin Ken chuckled as he related the events that had occurred today. When they heard how Lin Dong had managed to defeat Wu Sha while at Earthly Yuan Later Stage and even took the opportunity to make a break through to Heavenly Yuan Stage, Lin Zhentian and the rest were faintly moved. Even though they had not witnessed the battle firsthand, they guessed that it must have been exceedingly thrilling.

“Lin LangTian of the Lin Clan had advanced to Heavenly Yuan Stage when he was fifteen years old. Heh, compared to Dong-er who managed to advance when he was sixteen years old, Lin Dong definitely does not lose out by much to him. A world-class genius has finally emerged from my Lin Family!”

After hearing Lin Zhentian talk about the most famous person in

the Lin Clan, Lin Dong's eyes slightly narrowed as he slowly tightened his fist. That was the first person that he had hated ever since he was young, and he would never forget that name even if he died.

“You have just advanced to Heavenly Yuan Stage, therefore your powers are not stable yet. During this period of time, you should avoid going out and instead stay in the manor while training.” Lin Zhentian said as he patted Lin Dong's shoulder.

“Yes.” At these words, Lin Dong also nodded his head.

“Tomorrow, gather all the men. I will not let my Lin Family members die in vain!”

Lin Zhentian smiled gently at Lin Dong before he turned around. Immediately, a cold and harsh look surfaced on his aged face.

“Father, the bandits from the Black Dragon Stockade are cunning and devious. After they were repelled by us today, they would surely have hidden themselves.” Lin Xiao furrowed his eyebrows as he said.

“When they escaped today, I already secretly sent men to tail them.” Lin Ken indifferently smiled. He had long anticipated that Lin Zhentian would never drop this matter, thus he had already made some preparations.

“Father, it is highly likely that a mastermind is behind this attack

by the Black Dragon Stockade.” Lin Xiao reasoned. Given the Lin Family’s strength, if the Black Dragon Stockade did not have someone’s backing, they would not have dared to make their move against the Lin Family.

Lin Zhentian nodded his head. Seated on his chair, a fierce look surfaced on his face. In this whole QingYan Town, who else could have masterminded this attack besides the Lei and Xie Families?

“Tomorrow, I will wipe the Black Dragon Stockade off the face of this Earth. After enduring silently for so many years, it’s time to let others know that our Lin Family is not such a pushover!”

“If anyone wants to mess around with us, they should be prepared to pay a hefty price!”

Chapter 74: Massacring the Black Dragon Stockade

The next day, when the sky was still shrouded in darkness, many men gathered in the Steel Wood Manor. These men were dressed from head to toe in black, even the horses hooves were bounded with layers of cloth. Everyone worked in an eerie silence as a faint icy-cold murderous intent hung in the air.

Lin Zhentian gazed at the assembled men as a cold glint flashed across his eyes. Without any needless words, he waved his hand, signalling the entire troop, as he, Lin Xiao and Lin Mang led the group out of the manor like a black tidal wave.

Atop the manor walls, Lin Dong stood while he gazed at the Lin Family troops, that were quickly fading away into the darkness of the early morning, and let out a soft sigh. This was the first time he had seen the Lin Family muster such a large force. It was easy to imagine the shocked expressions the other factions in the vicinity would have, after they heard of the complete extermination of the Black Dragon Stockade.

Looks like Lin Zhentian and his group no longer planned to continue enduring like before...

...

The sky gradually brightened as the sun broke through the restraints of the horizon to once again shine its warm rays upon the vast lands and the endless seas.

Quite a few of the Lin Family younger generation members were crowded on the manor walls: Lin Dong sat on a stone block as he chatted with Qing Tan, Lin Xia and the rest.

While they chatted, he noticed that Lin Xia and the rest constantly glanced towards the distance, with slight worry and concern in their eyes.

“Chuckles, don’t worry. Although the Black Dragon Stockade is strong, this time, our Lin Family has gathered all our forces and set out in full strength, and even grandfather has personally joined in. This can end in no other way for the Black Dragon Stockade.” Lin Dong smiled as he consoled them.

Upon hearing Lin Dong’s comforting words, the expression on Lin Xia and the rest slightly brightened.

“Lin Hong and I should be able to break through to Earthly Yuan Stage in two months time. Though we cannot match up to you, at that time we will be able to help out.” Lin Xia brushed away some of the fine black hair on her forehead, as she suddenly declared softly.

Upon hearing these words, Lin Dong gently smiled in response. Due to the existence of the Yang Yuan Stone Mining Lode, the amount of resources that Lin Xia, Lin Hong and the rest had access to, was far more bountiful than before. In fact, that they could even obtain Yang Yuan Pills now. In the past, such a scenario would be a mere pipe dream. However, now that they were blessed

with these plentiful resources, their training speed had likewise increased substantially.

“They’re back...”

Lin Dong leaped off the stone block and just as he was able to advise the crowd to get some rest first, his heart suddenly thumped. Feeling slightly elated, he lifted his head to gaze in a distance. At the fringe of his line of sight, the faint sound of galloping sounded out.

After hearing Lin Dong’s words, Lin Xia and they rest were also rather joyous as they hastily stood up. As expected, a huge group of men appeared at the limits of their sight. Finally, bringing the thundering of hooves, the group transformed into a powerful current that flooded into the opened gates of the manor.

As these men charged into the Steel Wood Manor, a slight bloody scent could also be smelled from their bodies. Evidently, they had just experienced a bloody battle.

After they watched them return triumphantly, ear shattering cheers erupted from within the manor.

“Father, is the problem settled?”

Lin Dong leaped down from the manor walls and asked Lin Xiao in a low voice. The former was able to see the dark red traces of blood on Lin Xiao’s clothes.

“Yes, from now onwards, the Black Dragon Stockade will cease to exist in this world.” Lin Xiao wore an extremely excited expression as he beamed and patted Lin Dong’s shoulders before pulling away a black cloth on one of the carts behind him, revealing the fully packed contents within, which comprised of gold and other items.

“These were taken from the Black Dragon Stockade. The bandits had a rather large collection indeed, if you find anything of interest, feel free to take it.” Lin Xiao declared.

Lin Dong’s gaze somewhat curiously turned towards the cart. His hands flipped through the various items; gold, silver and precious stones held no interest for him, thus his gaze only stopped at those items that appeared somewhat bizarre or strange.

After searching through the pile for half a day, Lin Dong had yet to find anything of interest. Just as he could bear with it no longer and thought of giving up, a piece of black metal that was half the size of his head appeared within his line of sight.

This piece of black metal was covered in dust, therefore it was very much inconspicuous. However, when Lin Dong first laid eyes on it, he could feel a slight undulation from the Mental Energy in his mind.

“Heh heh, you have quite a good pair of eyes, this is a fragment of Mysterious Yuan Metal. It has a rather good Yuan Power Dispelling effect. If a bit of its fragments were mixed into weapons, then even a Heavenly Yuan Stage expert would not dare to be struck by the

weapon directly. Else, he would be instantly reduced into a bloody pulp.” Lin Xiao chuckled and explained when he saw Lin Dong’s gaze stop at that piece of black metal.

“Of course, what’s even more special about this Mysterious Yuan Metal fragment is that it is able to help to strengthen and direct Mental Energy.

“I see...”

Upon hearing Lin Xiao’s words, Lin Dong finally understood. A trace of Mental Energy slowly drifted out from his mind and twisted around the piece of black metal before suddenly floating upwards a bit.

At this scene, Lin Dong’s eyes lit up as he stretched out his hand to grab the black metal piece, smiling: “Now this item belongs to me...”

...

Not long after Lin Zhentian and the rest returned to the Steel Wood Manor, news of the Black Dragon Stockade extermination travelled through various channels before arriving at the ears of other factions

As Lin Dong expected, this matter caused some waves in the community. Although the Black Dragon Stockade bandit’s strength was not considered top tier, with two Heavenly Yuan Stage

experts, they were considered as one of the stronger factions. However, no one could have expected that even with that level of strength, they were still easily wiped out by the Lin Family. This caused several factions to begin losing some of the contempt that they had before.

Qingyang Town, Lei Family.

“Heh, this Lin Family, are they purposely flaunting their power to our Lei Family?” In a lavish room, Lei Bao sat in the head’s chair as he held a teacup while sneering.

“Father, it seems like Lin Zhentian might have deduced that our Lei Family was the one that instigated the Black Dragon Stockade to raid the Steel Wood Manor.” Lei Pi frowned as he said.

“So what if he knows? What can he do?” Lei Bao shook his head. Soon after, his eyes flashed as he continued: “The reason why the Lin Family travelled to Yan City this time, was to sell Yang Yuan Stones, right?”

“Indeed, there must be a Yang Yuan Stone Mining Lode in the Steel Wood Manor! Or else the Lin Family could never have procured so many Yang Yuan Stones in such a short period of time.” Lei Pi muttered in a low voice.

Lei Bao slowly nodded his head, as a greedy and sinister light flickered in his eyes.

“Oh by the way Father, according to my sources, the reason why the attack by the Black Dragon Stockade on the Steel Wood Manor failed, was because Lin Dong from the Lin Family had advanced to Heavenly Yuan Stage!” Lei Pi slightly hesitated before he suddenly reported.

“Lin Dong? That sixteen year old brat from the Lin Family? How is that possible!” Upon hearing Lei Pi’s words, Lei Bao was slightly dazed. However, soon after, he involuntarily asked in a hoarse voice. His voice had become much sharper because of shock.

At this sight, Lei Pi also let out a bitter laugh. He did not want to believe it, but this was indeed the case.

Lei Bao’s aged face twitched violently before finally turning malevolent. In a deep voice, he said: “Lei Pi, find a chance to get rid of that brat. As for the Lin family, heh, they will not be arrogant for long...”

“Father, are you going to breakthrough soon?!”

After hearing Lei Bao’s words, Lei Pi was first shocked, though an ecstatic expression subsequently surfaced on his face as he asked.

“On the day when I successfully make a breakthrough, this Qingyang town would completely become our Lei Family’s domain!”

Lei Bao’s sinister smile turned even creepier as he looked in the

direction of the Steel Wood Manor. Fuming with rage between gritted teeth, he muttered: “Lin Zhentian, I want your entire Lin Family to become a pack of homeless stray dogs!”

Chapter 75: Shattering Yuan Shrapnel

Inside a wooden house, Lin Dong was seated down quietly with both of his eyes tightly shut. The air around him rippled, as streams of Yuan Power were continuously synthesized from Heaven and Earth, before they were absorbed into his body through his skin.

Currently, Lin Dong was fully concentrating on his Dan Tian. Now that he had stepped into Heavenly Yuan Stage, there were some noticeable changes happening in his Dan Tian.

The original Yuan Power in his body had taken on a deep blue hue because he had absorbed the Yin Energy from Qing Tan's body. As such his Yuan Power contained a rich and vibrant Yin Energy.

However, now that he had advanced to Heavenly Yuan Stage, Lin Dong was finally able to absorb Yang Energy from Heaven and Earth. Naturally, Yang Energy had an entirely different attribute from Yin Energy. One was bright and scorching, while the other was cold and icy. Therefore, when the two of them interacted with each, it was akin to water mixing with fire. They were completely incompatible.

Right now, the Yuan Power in Lin Dong's body was largely deep blue in color. Only a tiny portion appeared light-red in color. Compared to the rest of the Yuan Power, it seemed far too insignificant.

Red and blue, interwoven in his Dan Tian, distinct like two immiscible liquids.

Lin Dong could only helplessly shake his head as he observed the state of his Dan Tian. After all, the Yin Energy in his Dan Tian was extremely powerful and potent while the Yang Energy that he absorbed recently was of the most ordinary grade. As such, it was clearly unable to contend against the potent Yin Energy inside his Dan Tian.

“To reach Heavenly Yuan Late Stage, I must balance the Yin and Yang Energy in my body. Only then, can I proceed to the next step of attempting to fuse them together, reaching the step of successfully synergizing Yin and Yang and then condensing them to form Dan.”

As this thought flashed across his mind, Lin Dong gradually opened his eyes, a pained smile on his face. It seems like there was a downside to absorbing such potent Yin Energy. After all, even though he could directly obtain Yin Energy from Qing Tan’s body, but what about Yang Energy? Where exactly can he find such a potent Yang Energy that could counter the Yin Energy from Qing Tan’s body?

In fact, the Yin Pearls condensed from Qing Tan’s body were considered Grade 5 Yin Energy. To makes matters worse, Lin Dong had directly absorbed Yin Energy from Qing Tan’s body thus the Yin Energy he had absorbed was even more potent. This allowed Lin Dong, who was merely at Earthly Yuan Stage, to match up against a Heavenly Yuan Early Stage practitioner like Wu Sha. However, now that he had reached Heavenly Yuan Stage, it also

started to impede his progress...

“I must continue finding a way to obtain some special Yang Energy. If I rely solely upon the Yang Energy from Heaven and Earth, who knows how long it will take before I balance off the Yin Energy in my body?”

Lin Dong sighed as he stood up. In this past half a month's time, he has been thinking about this problem daily. However, where can one obtain special Yang Energy? Even Lin Zhentian and the rest absorbed normal Yang Energy from Heaven and Earth. Therefore, though Lin Dong had racked his brains over this matter, he was still unable to come up with a solution.

As he thought about this, Lin Dong helplessly shook his head. Promptly, he decided to temporarily suppress this thought. He lifted his palm as ten black shadows instantly flew out from his sleeves before they unexpectedly stopped and suspended themselves in the air around him.

On closer inspection, it turned out that these black shadows were actually ten thumb-sided pitch-black shrapnel. They were about an inch long and had sharp jagged ends. Although they were small, one look would reveal that these tiny items were in fact deadly weapons.

As these black shrapnel hovered around Lin Dong, if a Symbol Master was nearby, he could perhaps sense that these tiny shrapnel were being wrapped with a layer of Mental Energy. That was the reason why they were able to dance around in mid-air.

Lin Dong gazed at these black spots around him, a prideful smile on his face. Ever since he mastered the “Spiritual Movement Chapter” given to him by Master Ruo, his Mental Energy had gotten increasingly stronger. Furthermore, since these shrapnel were crafted from the Shattering Yuan Metal fragments: a victory spoil from Black Dragon Stockade, Lin Dong could control them rather smoothly and easily.

Lin Dong had termed these shrapnel as “Shattering Yuan Shrapnel”. These items had a strong penetration effect and they would be perfect to defend oneself and conduct sneak attacks. Furthermore, since they were secretly being controlled by Lin Dong’s Mental Energy, these “Shattering Yuan Shrapnel” would undoubtedly become one of Lin Dong’s secret killing moves.

“Swoosh!”

As these shrapnel hovered around Lin Dong’s body, Lin Dong suddenly extended his arm. Instantly, these ten shrapnel swiftly flew together in a straight line before a successive clear ‘tu-tu’ sound rang out. These shrapnel had hit and penetrated half an inch into a thick pillar!

If this attack was directed towards a person, he would undoubtedly suffer.

After witnessing this sight, Lin Dong nodded in satisfaction. With a wave of his arm, these “Shattering Yuan Shrapnel” immediately flew back into his sleeves and concealed themselves.

Lin Dong then decided to push open the door and exit. Just as he opened the door, the sounds of a bustling atmosphere entered his ear. Streams of people were constantly entering and surfacing from the mining lode as they carried with them pieces of freshly harvested Yang Yuan Stones.

“Young master Lin Dong.”

When they saw Lin Dong emerge, regardless of status, everyone stopped as they respectfully greeted him. During this period of time, the news that Lin Dong had defeated Wu Sha had spread like wildfire. Everyone now knew that this secretive person, was actually the most talented person in the entire Lin Family.

In response to their respectful greetings, Lin Dong smiled and politely nodded his head. Since he had advanced to Heavenly Yuan Stage, he was able to take up some part of the responsibilities in the family. Therefore, Lin Zhentian decided to hand over operation of the Steel Wood Manor’s mining lode to him.

Naturally, even though he was in charge, Lin Dong did not have to do much beside occasionally inspecting the amount of stones harvested. After all, the rest of the matters will be handled by experienced managers.

Lin Dong stood on a boulder as he stared into the deep mining lode, before he gently nodded his head. Now that they had become more proficient at mining, the amount of stones harvested had multiplied by several times. The enormous profits they now

enjoyed, was like heaven and earth compared to before.

After a casual inspection, Lin Dong decided to head back to the manor. However, just as this thought emerged in his head, he suddenly saw a commotion erupt at the exit of the mining lode. Instantly, his eyebrows furrowed as he instructed Qin Ying, who was nearby: “Uncle Qin Ying, could you go and take a look?”

“Yes.”

Upon hearing his words, Qin Ying nodded his head as he swiftly rushed towards the mining lode’s exit. Moments later, he quickly walked back.

“Young Master Lin Dong, when one worker was harvesting Yang Yuan Stones, he seemed to have discovered something else...” Qin Ying walked to Lin Dong’s side as he softly said.

“Oh? Let’s check it out.”

Lin Dong was stunned for a moment before he promptly whistled, Little Flame, which was sunbathing on another boulder, immediately dashed over.

After he saw that Lin Dong was planning to go into the mine personally, Qin Ying immediately waved his hands as a dozen elite guards immediately crowded over and followed Lin Dong into the mining hole.

The current mining hole had grown very large and spacious as they had mined for half a year. However, because this used to be a volcano, there were many tunnels and tiny passages in these mountain. Therefore, even the experienced workers did not know exactly how many passages there were.

With the head worker leading the way, they were able to swiftly traverse inside the mining hole. They followed the twisting passages and finally stopped after ten minutes. At the end of this passage, was a tiny crevice that was barely big enough for one person to squeeze into. Based on the scratch marks on the walls, it seems like this passage was only recently excavated.

“That worker accidentally unearthed a tiny tunnel here. Out of curiosity, he decided to explore it. However, in the end, he got severely burnt instead. It seems like it is filled with an extremely hot substance.” The head-worker carefully said.

Lin Dong gently nodded his head before he took two steps forward. With his eyes glued onto the crevice, he suddenly stretched out his hand before slowly reaching in.

As his palm entered that crevice, Lin Dong suddenly felt as if his entire arm was boiling. A powerful and violent hot energy was flowing into his body through his skin, before it was eventually deposited into his Dan Tian. Instantly, an exceptional burning sensation arose in his Dan Tian.

As he felt the changes occurring in his Dan Tian, Lin Dong's eyes immediately lit up. Moments later, surprise surfaced in his eyes.

That was because, he realized that contained within that burning air, was a special lava-hot Yang Energy!

Chapter 76: Mysterious Beast Bones

“Yang Energy?”

This discovery caused Lin Dong to be instantly taken back, however his eyebrows promptly furrowed. He had realized that this Yang Energy seemed extraordinarily berserk and savage. If one absorbed too much of this substance, it would wreck havoc on one's mind and body.

“This place used to be a volcano. Therefore, it is not strange that such a potent Yang Energy exists here. However, it's a pity...”

Naturally, it was a pity that there were berserk elements contained within the Yang Energy inside the crevice. After all, who would dare to absorb such a savage Yang Energy?

As Lin Dong poked about at the crevice entrance, a disappointed expression surfaced on his face. After half a month of searching for this kind of special Yang Energy, he was very reluctant to give up so easily now that he had finally found such a unique Yang Energy.

“Uncle Qin Ying, stand guard here with everyone else. Do not let anyone enter. I will go in and have a look.” Lin Dong tilted his head towards Qin Ying and said.

Upon hearing that Lin Dong wanted to personally enter the crevice, Qin Ying was alarmed. He instinctively wanted to stop Lin Dong, however, once Qin Ying recalled that Lin Dong's strength had far surpassed him, he deliberated for a moment before he

nodded his head.

After giving out instructions, Lin Dong immediately entered into the crevice. A few steps later, he found that Little Flame had also followed behind him. Looks like it did not mind the scorching heat inside the area.

At this situation, Lin Dong heaved a sigh of relief in his heart as he quickened his pace. Two to three minutes later, the narrow passage suddenly became very spacious as a layer of blazing red filled his vision.

What had appeared in front of Lin Dong was an area filled with blazing red-hot rocks. From a distance, the heat that was rising from the surface caused the surrounding air to become slightly distorted, making it seem like lava was flowing.

Lin Dong's eyes carefully scanned this blazing red-hot rocky area. Suddenly, he stopped and concentrated on the central area only to find a pile of tens of feet high white beast bones!

Such massive bones indicated that this was probably the largest beast that Lin Dong had ever encountered. Even though all that remained of the beast were its bones, Lin Dong could still sense an extraordinary pressure from these bones. One could only conclude that this was definitely not an ordinary Demonic Beast. However, how exactly the Demonic Beast turned to bones and was left here remained unknown.

Just as Lin Dong was feeling puzzled, every hair on Little Flame,

who was standing nearby, suddenly stood up. Immediately, it transformed into a red shadow as it dashed towards that pile of white beast bones.

Upon witnessing this sight, Lin Dong's facial expression changed immediately. This area was too strange and he did not dare to venture too deep. However, he never expected that Little Flame would ignore him and actually dash in head-first.

“This naughty creature!”

After cursing in a low voice, Lin Dong gritted his teeth as he quickly followed behind. As he stepped on the blazing red-hot rocks, he felt like he was stepping on burning charcoal. Immediately, he utilized the Yuan Power in his body to protect his feet, only then was somewhat relieved.

A human and a beast rapidly dashed across this blazing red-hot rocky area. Their pace finally slowing when they neared the beast bones.

Chapter 77: The Bewitching Flower

The crimson red flower stood all alone atop a rock. In contrast with its dry and barren surroundings, its vibrant and lively demeanor made it look especially exotic.

After taking one glance at that bewitching crimson red flower, Lin Dong's instincts immediately warned him that the flower was hardly ordinary. Of course, this was an obvious conclusion. The fact that this flower was able to bloom in such a harsh and challenging environment clearly indicated that it was something special.

While Little Flame slowly approached that pile of molten rocks, it periodically growled at that bewitching flower. However, in the end Little Flame did not dare to rush towards it.

As Lin Dong stood below the steaming rocks, he looked hesitantly towards that bewitching flower. After a long deliberation, he finally gritted his teeth and climbed up the rocks.

“Buzz Buzzz!”

Upon contact with the rocks, Lin Dong's palm immediately released a sizzling sound. Streams of cold Yin Yuan Power from his Dan Tian swiftly gushed out as they enveloped his body and protected him from being burnt by the heat.

Lin Dong quickly climbed up that pile of giant rocks as he realized that there was a tiny black tunnel about the size of a head

was at the top of the pile of giant rocks. The tunnel seemed to extend all the way down into the ground and an exceptional heat constantly erupted from it.

“Oh, so all the Yang Energy here originated from this deep hole.”

After witnessing this sight, Lin Dong finally realized this fact. Soon after, he turned to look at the bewitching flower that was situated nearby that dark tunnel.

As if it could feel that someone was gazing at it, that bewitching flower suddenly started to sway lightly. The faint mist surrounding it floated off and stealthily wrapped around Lin Dong's body.

When that mist surrounded Lin Dong's body, he suddenly felt his consciousness fade away as a sensation of extreme exhaustion emerged from his body. It was almost as if the life force within his body him was being forcefully sucked away.

While Lin Dong's consciousness gradually slipped away, that bewitching crimson red flower seemed to become even more vibrant and alluring.

As he faced this unexpected danger, Lin Dong's right hand violently shook. A powerful force was generated as the mysterious mist that was surrounding Lin Dong's head was forcibly dispersed.

Just as that mist was forcibly dispersed, Lin Dong suddenly woke

up. He stared at the crimson red flower with a terrified look and without further ado, he immediately attempted to retreat.

However, just as he was planning to leave this strange place, a mysterious suction force suddenly exploded from his right palm. Its target this time, was actually that bewitching flower!

Thanks to that violent suction force, the bewitching flower was forcibly uprooted and it directly flew towards his right palm under the astonished gaze of Lin Dong.

“Buzz buzz!”

In the instant when that bewitching flower collided with Lin Dong’s palm, streams of light shot out from his palm. Moments later, that bewitching flower was reduced to a blob of gooey crimson red liquid.

When that blob of crimson red liquid emerged, the Mental Energy inside Lin Dong’s mind suddenly began to undulate. That undulations directly caused Lin Dong’s temple to become agitated.

“What is going on?”

Just as shock emerged in his heart, Lin Dong saw that the blob of gooey liquid had suddenly tunneled into his palm.

“Boom!”

As that blob of gooey liquid penetrated into Lin Dong's palm, he immediately heard an explosion go off in his head. He could no longer hear any sounds from his surroundings. All he could feel now was an exceptionally powerful and unique energy rapidly coursing through his body. Finally, like a wild beast, it forcefully broke into his mind.

“Ahhhh!”

A painful scream abruptly rang out in the quiet cave as Lin Dong's body fell down from that giant bolder and frantically rolled around on the ground. Right now, his head felt like it was about to swell and explode. The extreme pain caused Lin Dong's entire face to turn extremely hideous and twisted.

As Little Flame saw Lin Dong frantically rolling around on the floor, it released an anxious roar. However, it did not dare to approach Lin Dong at this moment. It's acute senses told it that an exceptionally powerful force was currently coursing through Lin Dong's body and this force was potent enough to kill.

Painful screams constantly echoed about the mountain cave. Currently, veins had popped up all over Lin Dong's face as they wriggled like earthworms. He could clearly feel the Mental Energy within his mind rapidly fusing with that extremely powerful force. As the two forces harmonized, it was as if there was a catalyst that allowed his Mental Energy to grow extremely rapidly.

While his Mental Energy strengthened at a great speed, that

acute pain grew more and more intense. If this situation continued, Lin Dong's mind would definitely be forcefully blown apart by that rapidly growing Mental Energy!

Under the threat of death, Lin Dong's mind became slightly clearer. His body continuously trembled as he forced himself to endure that unbearable pain while he desperately tried come up with a solution.

Thanks to his persistent personality that was forged into him since young, Lin Dong was able to endure this pain as he desperately thought of a plan to save himself. Anyone else would surely have long been driven insane by this pain.

An insane glint flashed in Lin Dong's eyes as he suddenly recited a chant in his heart.

“Spirit is split into Yin and Yang. Spiritual Movement begins with life...”

This chant was from “Spiritual Movement Chapter”. The current Lin Dong was like a drowning man holding on to the last stalk of grass. Without thinking it over, he quickly recited the chants from the two other parts of “Spiritual Movement Chapter”.

The “Spiritual Movement Chapter” that Master Ruo from Yan City had given to Lin Dong was split into three different parts. Over these few months, Lin Dong had successfully mastered the first part. However, with regards to the two remaining sections, he had made scant progress.

However, at this moment, he found that the slow progress that he used to make had suddenly sped up. As he recited the chants, Lin Dong could vividly feel the violent Mental Energy within his mind gradually being tamed.

Presently, Lin Dong's body had stopped trembling. He sat down on the floor and began to recite the "Spiritual Movement Chapter" chants in his head.

The formless yet powerful Mental Energy was now raging about inside Lin Dong's mind.

In mere minutes, this powerful Mental Energy was quickly sucked dry as Lin Dong successfully mastered the remaining two parts of the "Spiritual Movement Chapter".

If Master Ruo knew how Lin Dong had managed to master the 2nd and 3rd parts of Spiritual Movement Chapter in a short few minutes, one could only imagine his expression...

As Lin Dong successfully mastered the third part of "Spiritual Movement Chapter", he could sense that something seemed to have broken open up in his mind. Immediately, he could feel the Mental Energy within his mind begin to rapidly gush towards that location in the middle of his head.

"NiWan Palace has opened!"

As he became aware of this situation, Lin Dong was slightly taken aback. Based on his interpretation of “Spiritual Movement Chapter”, he knew that one of the most important steps in training Mental Energy was opening NiWan Palace.

It was said that there are nine palaces in the head, corresponding to the nine heavens. The palace in the middle was termed as NiWan Palace!

This was the greenhouse for cultivating Mental Energy, akin to a Dan Tian for Yuan Power!

Mental Energy gushed into his NiWan Palace like a tidal wave and when that last bit of Mental Energy finally entered, the aching sensation in his head instantly vanished, at which Lin Dong’s tightly shut eyes also opened!

As he opened his eyes, an uncontrollable whistling sound burst out from Lin Dong’s mouth. Just as that whistle rang out, a powerful formless Mental Energy violently gushed out from Lin Dong’s NiWan Palace!

“Boom!”

The enormous mountain cave immediately shook as a formless shock wave instantly emerged with Lin Dong at the epicenter. On the ground, layers of rock fragments were instantly blown away before they finally collided with the cave walls and caused the cave to tremble.

“Huff...”

Lin Dong hurriedly caught his breath as he lifted up his head to witness the damage that he had done. Shock filled his eyes.

Chapter 78: Sharp Increase in Mental Energy

“Is this the power of Mental Energy...”

As he looked at the messy mountain cave, Lin Dong could not help but mutter to himself. A look of awe involuntarily surfaced in his eyes. The destructive potential of Mental Energy was able to rival that of a Heavenly Yuan Late Stage practitioner.

“What in the world is that damned flower?”

After he regained his wits, Lin Dong recalled the crazily painful sensation that he just went through as his face involuntarily paled. Right now, he could feel that his Mental Energy had strengthened by several times and these changes were likely caused by that crimson red flower.

With regards to Mental Energy, Lin Dong could only be considered an amateur. However, he did not expect that the Mental Energy, that he was so inadequate in, had now become his greatest weapon.

Even though he had never properly tested out the prowess of his Mental Energy, Lin Dong had a strange confidence that if he used Mental Energy to duel with others, he could probably match up even against Heavenly Yuan Late Stage experts.

“It seems to be easier to train Mental Energy compared to Yuan

Power.” Lin Dong scratched his head. Although he only managed to master the final two parts of “Spiritual Movement Chapter” thanks to a stroke of good fortune, he felt that even without the extraordinary circumstances today, he should be able to completely master them within half a year. This progress seemed much faster compared to training Yuan Power.

Of course, this was all Lin Dong’s assumptions. If Master Ruo knew about them, he might just spit out a mouthful of blood. After all, when he first attempted to master the first three parts of “Spiritual Movement Chapter”, it had taken him a few years. Who would dare to tell him that it was much easier to train Mental Energy compared to Yuan Power?

As he shook off the remaining ache in his head, Lin Dong climbed up from the ground. Suddenly, he turned to look at his right palm. The events that had just occurred was evidently started by the Stone Talisman embedded within his palm. However, though he could not explain it, he sensed that a significant portion of that mysterious energy condensed from that crimson red flower was absorbed by the Stone Talisman.

As such, the energy that he absorbed was merely a small portion from that crimson red flower. Thankfully it was only a small portion. If he had absorbed the entire thing, Lin Dong believed that right now, his head would have exploded into a bloody mess.

As his finger gently traced across his palm, Lin Dong’s eyebrows gently furrowed. This Stone Talisman now seemed even more mysterious. One could only speculate about its history...

“Bam!”

While Lin Dong furrowed his eyebrows, he suddenly heard rocks falling from the entrance of the mountain cave. Soon after, a few figures swiftly dashed in. Once they saw Lin Dong in the mountain cave, they deeply heaved a sigh of relief.

“Father, Grandfather!”

When he saw them, Lin Dong was taken aback. Promptly, he greeted them. Indeed, these people were Lin Zhentian, Lin Xiao and the rest.

“You cheeky brat. You really don’t understand how profound and vast our world is. Is there any place you won’t barge into?”

Lin Zhentian and the rest swiftly landed besides Lin Dong. After a vigilant glance at his surroundings, they began to chide him.

In response, Lin Dong could only let out a hollow laugh.

After they saw that Lin Dong was fine, Lin Zhentian and the rest began to feel relieved. Only then did they finally have the mood to survey this mountain cave. Immediately, a look of awe surfaced in their faces.

“Such a rich Yang Energy!”

When Lin Zhentian and the rest lightly sucked in a breath of scorching air, they were first delighted. Soon after, they began to frown: “It’s such a pity. The Yang Energy here is too savage and it cannot be absorbed into one’s body. If not, this will surely be an invaluable training ground!”

As they spoke, a disappointed look surfaced on Lin Zhentian’s face. The Yang Energy here was several times more potent compared to the ordinary Yang Energy from Heaven and Earth. If he could successfully absorb the Yang Energy here, perhaps he would be able to finally make a breakthrough after decades of stagnation.

The current Lin Zhentian was already at Heavenly Yuan Late Stage. If he advanced one more step, he would enter into Yuan Dan Stage. This would be an earth-shattering event for the entire Lin Family.

Upon seeing Lin Zhentian’s disappointed expression, Lin Xiao and the rest softly sighed. If Lin Zhentian could advance to Yuan Dan Stage, then their Lin Family would have a say in not just Qingyang Town, but the entire Yan City. Furthermore, at that time, even if the Lei and Xie Families allied together, they would pose little threat to the Lin Family.

Glancing at Lin Zhentian and the rest as they lapsed into silence, Lin Dong’s facial expression turned serious. He lightly twirled his right palm and a powerful suction force emerged from within as he immediately sucked in the surrounding Yang Energy into his palm.

Lin Dong did not absorb the Yang Energy directly into his body.

Instead, he first filtered it through the Stone Talisman. Now that his Mental Energy had become stronger, Lin Dong could gradually discern the powers of the Mysterious Stone Talisman. For example, refining...

“Dong-er, what are you doing?!”

As the Yang Energy surrounding them vibrated, Lin Xiao was immediately alerted. His facial expression abruptly changed as he shouted at Lin Dong.

After they heard Lin Xiao’s shout, Lin Zhentian and the rest immediately regained their wits. When they saw that Lin Dong was actually absorbing the surrounding Yang Energy, their facial expressions also changed dramatically.

“Father, what all of you want should be this type of Yang Energy?”

Under the dramatic gazes of the crowd, Lin Dong only gently smiled as he lifted up his right palm. A prominent light-red mist was now floating on his palm.

As they stared at that ball of mist on Lin Dong’s palm, Lin Zhentian and the rest were taken aback. They could sense that this ball of mist was the special Yang Energy that filled up this mountain cave. However, the violent elements inside that Yang Energy had completely disappeared!

That is to say, the ball of Yang Energy could be directly absorbed into one's body!

“This...”

The few of them were dumbstruck as they witnessed this scene. Moments later, they recovered their wits. Immediately, Lin Zhentian grabbed onto Lin Dong, both his arms shaking in excitement as he asked: “Good Grandson. How did you do it?”

It was understandable that Lin Zhentian would become this emotional. After all, this matter directly influenced his chances of advancing to Yuan Dan Stage. This was a vital matter for him and the entire Lin Family.

“Oh. After I absorbed the Yang Energy here into my body and circulate it around, all the violent elements will automatically disappear...” Lin Dong was naturally not going to reveal the existence of the Stone Talisman. Therefore, he blinked his eyes as he innocently said.

Upon hearing his reply, Lin Zhentian and the rest were stunned. How is this possible?

“Father, could it be that Lin Dong has a special body characteristic? The ability to automatically filter off any harmful influences or substances?” Lin Xiao furrowed his eyebrows as he reasoned.

Lin Zhentian's eyebrows tightly furrowed. After all, this explanation seemed too absurd? However, he could not think of any alternative explanations. Therefore, eventually, he could only nod his head in agreement.

“Haha, Father. Regardless of the reason, this is still good news.” Lin Ken, who was standing nearby, said with a happy smile.

“Grandfather, next time when you wish to train, I will first absorb the Yang Energy here and refine it in my body before I pass it to you. That way, you should be able to absorb them too?” Lin Dong humbly scratched his head as he suggested.

“Of course! Sure!”

At these words, Lin Zhentian was like an excited kid as he instinctively shouted out twice. After his shouts died out, he finally regained his wits as he awkwardly looked at Lin Xiao and the rest, who broke into laughter nearby. His previous dignified image was now completely shattered...

Upon seeing Lin Xiao and the laughing, a smile surfaced in Lin Dong's heart. In his family, the person who could most rapidly breakthrough to Yuan Dan Stage was naturally Lin Zhentian. Furthermore, Lin Dong clearly knew that once their family had a Yuan Dan Stage practitioner, it would lead to a complete upheaval.

When that time arrives, their Lin Family would no longer have to worry about the Lei and Xie Families!

Chapter 79: The Underground Bazaar

Atop a secluded cliff, Lin Dong was silently sat. The surroundings heave and surged as streams of Yuan Power constantly emerged before they finally poured into Lin Dong's body.

Hovering in front of Lin Dong were ten dark-red Yang Yuan Pills. Every half an hour, Lin Dong would open his mouth slightly as an Elixir Pill automatically entered his mouth.

Each time an Elixir Pill entered into his body, it would cause a faint white steam to emerge from the top of Lin Dong's head. Contained with that steam was a mysterious fragrance.

This quiet training lasted for a full five hours before Lin Dong's tightly shut eyes gradually began to open. A mouthful of white air flowed out through his throat and out from his nose. Instantly, an exceedingly deep sound echoed out from within his body. It was a sound produced by his internal organs and bones...

“Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage.”

After that sound emerged, Lin Dong could feel that the Yuan Power within his body had suddenly become more vigorous. A smile emerged on the corner of his lips. It seems like after two months of training, he had finally advanced to Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage.

This smooth progress did not surprise Lin Dong. After all, he had been working hard during these two month. In fact, he had used

up to a dozen of Yang Yuan pills every day to boost his progress. Naturally, these Yang Yuan Pills were all refined with the Mysterious Stone Talisman.

Ten Yang Yuan Pills a day. If this were converted into Yang Yuan Stones, it would be equivalent to a hundred stones a day. This consumption was definitely more than extravagant. In fact, not even anyone in Qingyang Town, or even the entire Yan City could afford such a luxurious amount of resources.

Therefore, after such a luxurious treatment, if one was still unable to advance to Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage in two months, one's progress would be considered a little lacklustre. Or at least, this was what Lin Dong believed.

“Shsss!”

After Lin Dong finished his training, he stood up as he whistled towards the forest. Immediately, a red shadow dashed out like a lightning bolt. In these short two months, though Little Flame's body did not change much, a faint aura now exuded from its body. Right now, even Lin Xiao, who was a Heavenly Yuan Stage expert, could sense a trace of danger from it. According to Lin Zhentian, the current Little Flame could be considered as a true Demonic Beast.

Lin Dong knew this rapid progress and changes were likely related to the fiery-red pearl that it devoured. However, now that he found there was nothing else happening to Little Flame besides an accelerated growth rate, he let go off the worry in his heart.

Lin Dong rubbed the comfortably warm fur on Little Flame before he immediately tapped the ground with the tip of his feet as his figure dashed down the mountain. His speed was astonishingly swift.

If anyone was taking a close look, they would realize that Lin Dong's feet were actually half an inch off the surface!

He was not running but rather floating!

It was as if there was some mysterious object that carried him!

The formless thing that carried him was naturally Lin Dong's Mental Energy. Ever since he absorbed that mysterious flower's energy two month ago, his Mental Energy had rose rapidly. The current him had discovered many other uses for Mental Energy, and he was gradually becoming more proficient at controlling it.

Regardless, as Lin Dong did not have a mentor, he only knew the bare basics on how to utilize Mental Energy. Even though he clearly knew that if he could fully utilize this energy, it would surely be powerful force, but because he did not have a teacher right now, he could only rely on his own trial and error. This fact caused him some grief.

A man and a beast rapidly dashed down the mountain peak before they entered the mining lode at the foot of the mountain. They traversed through the windy and curvy tunnels and moments later, they finally reached that peculiar place they had discovered

two months back.

Ever since Lin Dong had demonstrated that he could refine the Yang Energy found in this mountain cave, during the past two months, he would refine some Yang Energy and deposit it into Lin Zhentian's body every three days.

As such, over this period of time, Lin Zhentian had completely shut himself off to train. Every time he received that pure and potent Yang Energy from Lin Dong, he would immediately shut himself off and concentrate on fully absorbing the Yang Energy before he finally emerged again. Then, he would once again receive, then shut himself off, and the cycle would repeat itself...

When Lin Dong stepped into the cave, as expected, he found Lin Zhentian already seated on a rock. With a smile, he immediately jumped behind Lin Zhentian and seated himself. As Lin Dong's right palm faced the formless air, a suction force immediately exploded out and sucked in Yang Energy. Meanwhile, his left palm was directed on a pressure point on Lin Zhentian's back as he continuously deposited the refined Yang Energy into the latter's body.

This process took a full hour.

“Huff...”

When he sensed the attraction force from Lin Zhentian's body decreasing, Lin Dong gently sighed. He was a little tired, after all this was not a mean feat. If his Mental Energy had not increased

greatly, he would probably be unable to accomplish this task.

“Dong-er, its been hard on you.”

Lin Zhentian slowly opened his eyes. Within both of his eyes, two different colors flowed, just like Yin and Yang Energy, causing him to look especially strange. As he tilted his head, he softly sighed as he saw Lin Dong’s lethargic face.

Lin Dong gently smiled, before he promptly asked: “How long before Grandpa can make a breakthrough?”

“Give me another two more months and I will try for a breakthrough!” A light sparkled in Lin Zhentian’s eyes as he replied in a deep voice.

Lin Dong nodded his head. Lin Zhentian had stagnated at Heavenly Yuan Late Stage for decades. Now that he had absorbed so much pure Yang Energy, he would only need to wait for an opportune moment to finally breakthrough.

...

Qingyang Town, Bazaar.

As Lin Dong leisurely walked on the crowded pavements, he casually glanced at the crowd of people who were coursing through the shops. Lin Dong was now forced to spend a large amount of his time with Lin Zhentian, recently, the Steel Wood Manor had been

handed over to Lin Ken and Lin Mang to manage. On the other hand, Lin Xiao was now in charge of the rest of Lin Family businesses in Qingyang Town. As for Lin Dong, now that he had advanced to Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage, he had decided to slow down his training regime. Therefore, he decided to tag along and help out.

Of course, though he wanted to help out, there actually was nothing much that he could do. Soon, he had a lot of free time of his hands and since he currently wanted to shop at the underground bazaar, he decided to use this time to do so.

As he navigated his way through the familiar streets, Lin Dong removed a straw hat from his Qian Kun Bag in order to shield his face before he finally walked into one the larger underground bazaars nearby.

Due to the fact that Lin Dong had come here several times to exchange Elixirs, he was rather familiar with the area. As he walked along the dark alleys, this time, he did not stop at one of the transaction rooms along both sides of the street. Instead, he chose to walk towards the deepest section. When he reached, his vision instantly expanded as a pretty large underground bazaar appeared before his eyes.

In this bazaar, there were several other people around. However, all of them were wearing straw-hats which made it impossible for others to discern their identities. Compared to the bazaar on the surface, there was definitely a need for secrecy in here. After all, most of the items sold here were of dubious origins. However, because of this reason, most of these items were of a much higher

grade compared to those on the surface.

As Lin Dong walked through his bazaar, he continuously looked at the goods being displayed at the stalls. Though there were several Elixirs being sold, most of them did not exceed Grade 3. Right now, Grade 3 and below Elixirs brought little benefit to Lin Dong. Although the potency of Elixirs above Grade exceeded that of Yang Yuan Pills, they were exceedingly rare. Therefore, the purpose of Lin Dong's trip this time was to see if he could find a few stalks of Grade 4 Elixirs.

While he walked, he saw several Grade 3 Elixirs. However, he had yet to see a single stalk of Grade 4 Elixir. Yet, Lin Dong was not worried. After all this bazaar was fairly large and even though Grade 4 Elixirs were rare, they were not impossible to find.

With these thoughts in mind, Lin Dong gradually travelled deeper into the bazaar. Finally, his footsteps stopped as his eyes turned towards a stall beside him. At this moment, there were various items being displayed on that stone platform. However, Lin Dong's eyes immediately locked onto a dried, wooden green rhizome right in the middle.

Green Wood Rhizome Elixir, Grade 4 Elixir.

Now that he had finally encountered a Grade 4 Elixir, Lin Dong heaved a sigh of relief in his heart. He took a step forward and just as he was about to grab that Grade 4 Elixir, the Mental Energy residing in his Ni Wan Palace suddenly vibrated slightly.

Even though this vibration was extremely light, Lin Dong still managed to detect it. His eyebrows lifted on the spot as he looked casually at the area where his palm had just drifted across. Finally, his eyes stopped at a piece of old wood that was covered by green moss.

Chapter 80: Ambush

Though the old wood was covered in moss, Lin Dong was able to see faint traces of some indistinct Mystical Symbols. Only then did he realize that these Mystical Symbols were probably the reason why his Mental Energy had vibrated.

Lin Dong's eyes only lingered for a moment on the old wood before he hastily withdrew his gaze. He pointed at the Grade 4 Green Wood Rhizome Elixir as he looked at the person dressed in black behind the counter and asked: "How much?"

At these words, the person in black, who was also wearing a straw hat, lifted the end of the hat slightly as his toneless voice replied: "One hundred Yang Yuan Stones."

"Isn't that slightly too much?" Lin Dong raised his eyebrow and retorted.

In response, the person in black spread out his hands, refusing to speak another word. That direct and efficient action caused Lin Dong to be somewhat speechless. Did the merchants down here all have such great personalities?

"What is this?" Lin Dong pointed at the moss-covered old wood and casually inquired.

"Not sure." The person in black replied in an indifferent manner.

Upon seeing that the seller was so frank about it, Lin Dong chuckled and continued: “This thing plus the Green Wood Rhizome Elixir for one hundred Yang Yuan Stones, how does that sound?”

“One hundred and fifty pieces.”

“Fifty Yang Yuan Stones for an object you know nothing about?” Lin Dong’s eyebrows furrowed as he questioned.

“If I knew what it was, then it would not be sold for fifty Yang Yuan Stones. From the indistinct Mystical Symbols on it, it should be an item that is related to Symbol Masters. If it were not for the fact that there are no Symbol Masters in this Qingyang Town, I would never have taken this out to be sold.” The person dressed in black robes lazily said: “If you want it, buy it. If you don’t, I won’t force you.”

Lin Dong was once again speechless. He had originally thought that he could take advantage of this situation. Never did he expect that these sellers were cunning as rats.

After standing before the booth for a while, Lin Dong could only sigh helplessly. He retrieved fifteen Yang Yuan Pills from his Qian Kun bag and toss them towards the person in black.

“Heh heh, you have flair.” In one swift motion, the person in black received the fifteen Yang Yuan Pills, pleasant surprise in his voice as he smiled and said.

In response, Lin Dong rolled his eyes. Without bothering to be polite, he grabbed the Green Wood Rhizome Elixir and the old wood, and stuffed them into the Qian Kun bag. Then, he turned and left.

During the remaining time, Lin Dong strolled around the underground bazaar a few times, yet he only managed to find merely one more Grade 4 Elixir. After which, he had no choice but to give up and exit the underground bazaar.

Once he left the bazaar, Lin Dong still cautiously strolled about the streets. When no one was around, he then took off his straw hat in a secluded corner. Soon after, he patted his Qian Kun bag while he walked towards the inner part of the bazaar.

Lin Dong walked slowly past several streets as the surrounding buzz of the crowd unknowingly grew softer.

Lin Dong's figure once again passed another street when his footsteps abruptly came to a stop. The bored look on his face also slowly dissipated.

This was because he had found that there was not a soul in sight on this street!

The bazaar was still the most crowded and popular place in Qingyang Town, how could one of its streets be so empty? Furthermore, he clearly remembered that this street was rather busy in the past...

“Swoosh!”

In the instant when Lin Dong’s footsteps stopped, an exceptionally piercing sonic boom rang out. A sharp arrow burst out from one of the buildings like a flash of lightning. From a tricky angle, it arced towards Lin Dong’s back with the intent of doing him harm.

That sudden sneak attack caused Lin Dong’s facial expression to change slightly as he frantically turned his head only to find the arrow was already approaching him and he had nowhere to dodge.

At that critical moment, Lin Dong did not lose his composure. His mind nudged as a stream of Mental Energy immediately gushed out from his Ni Wan Palace!

“Buzz!”

The arrow was magically halted in mid-air, just half an inch away from Lin Dong. A fragrant smell could be faintly discerned from the tip of the arrow. Evidently, it had been smeared with a lethal poison and if Lin Dong had been hit by it, he would have died instantly!

“Someone is trying to murder me!”

As that thought flashed across his mind, Lin Dong immediately retreated as the arrow hovering in front of him fell to the ground. While Lin Dong was retreating, suddenly, sonic booms sounded

out in his surroundings as a torrent of arrows viciously rained down on him.

With a serious expression on his face, a vigorous Yuan Power undulated around Lin Dong. He slowly extended his Mental Energy and was able to discern the trajectories of all the arrows before he deftly dodged all of them.

“Swoosh swoosh.”

The arrows slammed heavily into the floor and penetrated half a finger’s length into the ground. Meanwhile, the tail of the arrow shook vigorously as it released a buzzing sound.

“Swoosh swoosh swoosh!”

As Lin Dong attempted to retreat, a cold glint emerged in his eyes. Promptly, he lifted his arm up, as ten black shadows immediately flew out from his sleeves and were directed towards the roof of the buildings surrounding him. Instantly, a series of low groans sounded out as ten men wielding bows tumbled down from the roof.

“Men from the Lei Family!”

When he saw the garments on these people, Lin Dong’s facial expression changed slightly. He never expected that the Lei Family would act so despicably.

“Clap clap!”

Just as Lin Dong’s expression turned icy cold, a clapping sound was heard. Lin Dong turned his head, only to see two men smiling at him from a short distance away.

“Lei Pi!”

When Lin Dong saw the middle-aged man on the left, his eyebrows furrowed. Naturally, he knew that this was a man who held a pretty high status in the Lei Family. However, he never expected that this person would personally lead this mission. As for the man beside him, he was evidently an expert from Lin Family. Based on Lin Dong’s instincts, it seemed like both of them were at least Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage...

“Haha, you are indeed the Lin Family’s genius. In just mere seconds, you have killed ten good men from my Lei Family. No wonder Father wants you dead...” As Lin Dong furrowed his eyebrows, Lei Pi smiled in return. However, contained within his smile, was a dark and murderous intent. It seems like Lin Dong’s lightning fast counter had far exceeded Lei Pi’s expectations.

“Hehe, the Lei Family is truly shameless. In order to deal with a younger generation member, you actually deployed such a massive force. If news of this matter spreads, your Lei Family will definitely lose all of its reputation.” Lin Dong chuckled.

“Well, you don’t have to worry about it. News of today’s events will never spread.” Lei Pi waved his hand, an apathetic look on his

face.

“So the Lei Family really intends to go to war with the Lin Family?” Lin Dong’s eyes looked equally dark. The Lei Family’s actions clearly demonstrated that they intended to battle with the Lin Family.

“In two months, the Lin Family will become a pack of homeless dogs. At that time, Lin Zhentian and the rest will be accompanying you.” Lei Pi said with a menacing smile as his mouth cracked open and revealed his pearly white teeth.

“However, before that happens, I will first take care of you!”

“Huff...”

Lin Dong took in a deep breath before he gradually exhaled. On his slightly childish face, an awe-inspiring look surfaced as he immediately stamped his sole on the ground and charged towards Lei Pi and his partner!

“I am afraid that with just the two of you, you do not have the qualifications to kill me!”

Chapter 81: Reversal

“That arrogant brat!”

After seeing that Lin Dong had actually took the initiative to charge forward, a sneer appeared on Lei Pi's face. Although Lin Dong had formerly defeated Wu Sha, that kind of situation would clearly never happen to him!

Lei Pi took a step forward as a strong Yuan Power gushed out from within his body. A sinister glint flashed across his eyes, before his fist punched out. The power behind it was so tremendous that a low sonic boom could be heard.

A genuine killing blow right from the start. Lei Pi evidently planned to dispatch Lin Dong in the quickest way possible.

The terrifying fist rapidly grew bigger before Lin Dong's eyes. However, in the blink of an eye, his palm suddenly extended and with a 'chi liu' sound, the palm slipped past Lei Pi's fist and grabbed his wrist. With a firm pull, the force actually managed to cause Lei Pi's body to be pulled forward.

In the instant when Lei Pi's body was jerked forward, an ominous glint flitted across Lin Dong's eyes. His knee abruptly thrust upwards, fiercely smashing towards Lei Pi's neck. A rather ruthless attack.

Lin Dong's attack was so quick and violent that even Lei Pi himself momentarily panicked. However, he instantly regained his

wits as his hands hastily slapped at Lin Dong's knee.

“Thump!”

Both of Lei Pi's palms heavily slapped against Lin Dong's knee and a sharp pain immediately transmitted from his hands. Lei Pi felt as if he had slapped a piece of metal. However, he had also borrowed the resulting force to stabilize his body, and from there, his leg furiously lashed at Lin Dong's head.

Lin Dong had a calm expression on his face as Yuan Power burst out from his fist before it heavily clashed with Lei Pi's sole!

“Boom!”

Fist and foot made contact as a powerful shock wave blasted outwards. Lin Dong's shoulder was violently jolted back while Lei Pi staggered back a few steps. Soon after, shock appeared on his face: “Heavenly Yuan Stage!”

Unperturbed, Lin Dong calmly gazed at Lei Pi's shock twisted face yet the former felt a little regret in his heart. If Lin Dong had been just that tiny bit faster earlier, he would have been able to snap Lei Pi's neck before he could adopt a defensive measure.

“Lei Xing, attack together and kill him!”

Lei Pi gazed at the youngster before him, horrified. It was as if his mind had been completely flipped over and he now found himself

in a perilous situation. Although he had long heard the news the Black Dragon Stockade's Wu Sha's defeat by Lin Dong's hand, Lei Pi had always believed it was because Lin Dong had some assistance. Lei Pi could never have imagined that Lin Dong had also reached Heavenly Yuan Stage. After all, a sixteen or seventeen year old Heavenly Yuan Stage practitioner was indeed terrifying.

As his thoughts churned and flipped in his head, Lei Pi let out a ferocious shout. The more strength Lin Dong displayed, the more intense the killing intent in Lei Pi's heart. If he let Lin Dong continue to grow for a few more years, who would be able to stand up to him among the Lei Family?

The somewhat tall and sturdy man, that was standing to nearby, nodded his head, with a dark expression on his face. He clenched both his fists as a vigorous Yuan Power throbbed around his body, emitting a buzzing sound.

“Bang!”

The duo almost simultaneously rushed forward, one on the left, while the other on the right, as they surrounded Lin Dong in a perfect pincer angle. Faced with two famous and highly experienced Heavenly Yuan Stage experts, Lin Dong's expression turned into one of extreme concentration.

Tens steps was covered in the twinkle of an eye, as Lei Pi's and Lei Xing's ruthless offensive surrounded Lin Dong in an instant.

“Bang bang bang!”

Lin Dong's face stretched taut. Joining his two fingers together, a vigorous Yuan Power quickly gathering around them. Each time he thrust out his fingers, the force generated was enough to forcefully blow back any of their attacks. Right now, since Lin Dong was at Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage, if he were to fight individually with either of them, he would definitely outclass them!

Three shadows intertwined together, like a hurricane. As their Yuan Power collided, a series of deep echoes continuously rang out.

Just as the battle between the three of them intensified, the facial expressions on Lei Pi and Lei Xing gradually turned uglier. Lin Dong's ability and real-life combat experience was causing immense trouble for them. Most importantly, Lin Dong seemed to have mastered a few extremely powerful martial arts. As such, each time he formed hand seals, the two of them were forced to retreat temporarily.

“Lei Xing!”

Lei Pi's expression turned increasingly dark. Out of the blue, he suddenly shouted out as an extremely bright Yuan Power flashed on his right fist. Instantly, this light condensed into a lightning ball. The undulating energy within potent enough to cause one's scalp to turn numb.

Dashing Lightning. This was a Level 4 Martial Arts from the Lei Family. Lin Dong had seen Lei Li display this martial before when they clashed during the Qingyang Town hunt. It was extremely

powerful indeed.

Just as Lei Pi executed his ‘Dashing Lightning’, an extremely bright glow exploded also exploded on Lei Xing’s fist. Instantly, both of them viciously directed their fists, like two lightning bolts, towards Lin Dong’s head.

In that instance, even Lin Dong felt a strong sense of danger in his heart. With a glint in his eyes, he stopped moving temporarily as he suddenly turned his head. Immediately, a bolt of Mental Energy was viciously directed towards Lei Xing’s mind.

That sudden Mental Energy attack caused Lei Xing, who was totally unprepared, to experience an extreme pain in his head. The strength of his attack instantly decreased.

Just as Lei Xing panicked, Lin Dong’s body nimbly reached into his sleeves. Using another bolt of Mental Energy, a black shadow swiftly dashed out. With a swoosh sound, it viciously struck the back of Lei Xing’s head.

This sudden development happened in a lightning fast second. Lin Dong, who was originally in grave danger, had instantly defused the situation and even managed to assassinate Lei Xing using an unusual method!

“Lei Xing!”

As he saw a bloody foam spouting out from the corners of Lei

Xing's mouth, Lei Pi's pupils dilated and his face turned hideously frightful. Immediately, he viciously directed that lightning ball in his hand towards Lin Dong's back.

“Buzz!”

However, moments before that lightning ball could penetrate Lin Dong's body, a powerful formless energy suddenly emerged and forcefully halted Lei Pi's attack.

After utilizing Mental Energy to block the attack, Lin Dong's palm curled as he recalled the “Shattered Yuan Shrapnel” stuck on Lei Xing's head and retreated a dozen steps. He then summoned the rest of his “Shattered Yuan Shrapnel” to return to his sleeves with a wave of his hand.

After he finished, he turned his icy gaze at Lei Xing, who was now lying lifelessly on the floor, and Lei Pi, who wore a hideous expression on his face.

“You've killed Lei Xing...”

Lei Pi's face violently twitched as he stared at Lei Xing's lifeless eyes. Even though he was extremely enraged, he felt a chilling sensation in his heart. Even with the two of them together, they were unable to swiftly dispose of Lin Dong. In fact, he even found an opening to kill one of them. This feat was something that even a Heavenly Yuan Late Stage expert would find difficult to do!

However, Lin Dong managed to accomplish it!

Lin Dong wore a casual expression on his face. As he grabbed onto a piece of “Shattered Yuan Shrapnel”, his palms trembled slightly. This was the first time that he had killed another person. However, it seems like he did not have much of a phobia towards it...

“The next one will be you...”

Lin Dong slowly lifted up the “Shattered Yuan Sharpnel” in his hand. Though his voice was slightly coarse, his tone caused a chill to be felt in the depths of one’s bones.

Chapter 82: One wounded, one dead

As Lei Pi stared at the razor-sharp “Shattered Yuan Shrapnel” in Lin Dong’s palm, he felt as if all his skin suddenly chose that moment to tighten up.

He had not anticipated how vicious and ruthless an immature looking youngster like Lin Dong could be. Previously, when he was being surrounded by the two of them, he did not panic but rather waited for an opportunity to assassinate one of them. This level of nerves and skill caused even Lei Pi’s heart to involuntarily tremble.

“I was careless this time...”

This thought flashed across Lei Pi’s heart. However, immediately after, a bitter feeling emerged in his heart. It was not that he was careless, but rather Lin Dong was simply too strong. No one could have imagined that in just one year, the boy who was barely able to defeat Lei Li, had already advanced to this terrifying level.

“Dong-er!”

Just as Lei Pi’s vision rapidly flickered, Lin Xiao’s hurried shout suddenly sounded out from nearby. Immediately, a large number of footstep could be heard homing in on their location.

Even though the Lei Family was very powerful, the Lin Family also had an enviously high status in Qingyang Town. Therefore, news of this event soon reached Lin Xiao’s ears.

“Dammit.”

When he realized that Lin Xiao had discovered them so rapidly, Lei Pi’s facial expression darkened. He looked once again at Lin Dong who stared back with an ice-cold gaze while holding onto the “Shattered Yuan Shrapnel”. Lei Pi finally understood that his mission was not only a total failure, but it had even caused the Lei Family to lose a Heavenly Yuan Stage expert. This time, they had suffered a massive loss.

“You little bastard. This will not end so easily, just wait and see!”

Lei Pi lifted Lei Xing’s corpse as he directed a poisonous gaze at Lin Dong. After leaving behind a threat, Lei Pi’s figure shot away as he immediately leapt on a roof and planned to escape.

“Thinking of escaping?”

When he saw Lei Pi attempting to escape, Lin Dong immediately chuckled. Since the Lei Family had already severed all ties with their family, there was no need to have mercy on them. A Heavenly Yuan Stage practitioner was an extremely important asset to the Lei Family. Hence, if he could kill one more, it would definitely deliver a devastating blow to them.

“Swoosh!”

Lin Dong’s arm jerked forward as the “Shattered Yuan Shrapnel”

in his hand transformed into a black shadow and swiftly shot towards Lei Pi.

However, Lei Pi was already on guard against Lin Dong. Once he saw the later make his move, a vigorous Yuan Power undulated around his body as he quickly shifted his body and evaded that incoming black shadow.

“Snort.”

Having avoided Lin Dong’s attack, Lei Pi was about to sneer when a sonic boom sounded out from behind him, causing him to turn around. Out of the corner of his eye, he saw the black shadow that he had just dodged now miraculously turn about and once again shot towards his head.

“How is that possible?!”

Lei Pi was so astonished by this scene that his soul almost jumped out of his body. The only thing he could do was to hurriedly raise his arms to protect his head.

“Pu!”

That black shadow drilled into Lei Pi’s arm. Even though Lei Pi had used Yuan Power to protect his arms, they were still penetrated easily. The razor-sharp shrapnel was so deeply embedded into Lei Pi’s arm that it caused him to bleed profusely.

Once his foe was hit, a wave once more emerged from Lin Dong's Ni Wan Palace. As if Lei Pi knew that Lin Dong could control this black shrapnel, just as he attempted to extract his "Shattered Yuan Shrapnel", Lei Pi gritted his teeth as the muscles in his arm immediately tightened up and forcefully trapped that piece of shrapnel in his flesh. After which, his sorry figure scuttled away.

"You little bastard. Next time, I will definitely grind your bones to dust!"

As Lei Pi's figure quickly disappeared, a vicious growl sounded out from afar.

"What a pity..."

Gazing at Lei Pi's retreating shadow, Lin Dong shook his head in regret. With a wave of his hand, several "Shattered Yuan Shrapnels" that he had secretly thrown out before turned into black shadows as they flew back into his sleeves. If Lei Pi was just one second slower, Lin Dong would be able to manipulate all these "Shattered Yuan Shrapnels" to launch a coordinated attack and finish Lei Pi off.

"Dong-er!"

Just as Lin Dong recalled his "Shattered Yuan Shrapnels", dozens of shadows emerged at one end of the street. Naturally, the man leading the group was Lin Xiao.

“Father.”

Lin Dong smiled and greeted when he saw Lin Xiao.

Lin Xiao dashed over as his eyes swept over the scene. His facial expression changed dramatically when he saw the corpses littered nearby. Immediately, he stepped in front of Lin Dong as he scanned the surroundings vigilantly. The rest of the Lin Family guards immediately drew their weapons and surrounded the two of them.

“What happened?”

Upon hearing Lin Xiao’s low voice, Lin Dong scratched his head humbly as he replied with a smile: “Some Lei Family men, Lei Pi and Lei Xing tried to kill me.”

“Lei Pi and Lei Xing?”

After hearing those two names, not only did Lin Xiao’s face begin to twitch, but the facial expressions on the surrounding guards also changed. Everyone knew that these two were core members of the Lei Family. In fact, since both of them were at Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage, they were quite famous in Qingyang Town!

“Those Lei Family scoundrels!”

Lin Xiao gnashed his teeth as he cursed. He never expected that the Lei Family would actually utilize two core members in order to

deal with a younger generation member of the Lin Family. As his thoughts reached this point, he could not help but worry. It looks like Lin Dong's immense potential had drawn the Lei Family to kill him. In future, there will be no choice but to arrange some guards to protect him.

“Are you alright? Where are they?”

“I am fine.” Lin Dong laughed. “As for Lei Xing, he should have died. One of Lei Pi's arm can also be considered crippled, I am afraid he can't do much in the meantime.”

At this moment, Lin Xiao's thoughts seemed to have stalled. Then, he abruptly turned around as he stared at Lin Dong and asked: “Lei Xing is dead? Lei Pi's arm is disabled? Did you do this?”

Swoosh swoosh!

At the same time, the Lin Family guards who were surrounding them were currently slack-jawed as their mouths hung wide open. They blankly stared at the youth that they were protecting in the middle as they suddenly began to feel their scalps turn numb. Lei Pi and Lei Xing were both Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage experts. The two of them had joined hands and also brought some men to support them. Yet they did not accomplish anything, but instead one was killed and the other injured?

“It was good luck, very good luck...”

As he looked around at the crowd who were gazing at him, Lin Dong felt a little awkward. If it were not for the fact that he knew this news would get out sooner or later, he would have much preferred not to tell them.

“Dammit. Can you kill a Heavenly Yuan Stage expert based on luck alone?” Some loyal Lin Family guards exchanged gazes as they mumbled.

Lin Xiao’s mouth opened and closed, but in the end, no words emerged. Right now, a storm was brewing inside his heart. After all, faced with the combination of Lei Pi and Lei Xing, he doubt that he could accomplish such a feat.

“Well done brat.”

As he somewhat forcefully patted Lin Dong’s shoulder with his palm, Lin Xiao finally spit out these three words in a proud and content manner.

Chapter 83: Ancient Wooden Block

“Absolutely disgraceful, you useless bastard!”

Deep in the courtyard of the Lei Family estate, a furious roar suddenly sounded out. When they heard this roar, every member of the Lei Family trembled. Right now, none of them dared to make even the slightest sound as they feared the consequences of doing so.

“Pa!”

Within a room in the deep courtyard, Lei Bao had an extremely hideous look on his face as he stared at the corpse lying before him. His body trembled violently, before a ferocious slap was finally flung at Lei Pi, who had his head bowed down while standing before Lei Bao. A clear and crisp sound immediately echoed out as Lei Pi's figure was blown away before heavily slamming into the wall. Since he was already injured, he instantly spat out a mouthful of fresh blood.

Upon seeing this scene, the rest of the Lei Family core members slightly shivered before tightly shutting their mouths. Right now, they were deathly afraid of making even the tiniest bit of noise. They knew that the current Lei Bao was so enraged that he had lost his senses.

“Two Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage practitioners in addition to ten experts from our Lei Family. Yet you've failed to take care of a sixteen, seventeen year old brat? So many men, but in the end you

were the only one to return? You still have the audacity to come back?!” Lei Bao’s face was hideous as he manically shouted.

Lei Pi could only hang his head in silence as he faced the furious Lei Bao. Lei Pi knew exactly how much of a disappointment he was. After all, he had led such a massive force, yet he was the only one to return in the end, running away like a dog with its tail between its legs. If it were not for his high standing in the Lei Family, Lei Bao would have probably killed him in one blow.

Lei Bao was just like a raging old bull. He was ashen faced as he constantly walked back and forth in the room. The loss of a Heavenly Yuan Stage expert was extremely devastating, even to his Lei Family. As he recalled this fact, his mind clouded over with rage.

The entire room was eerily silent. Finally, Lei Bao’s footsteps gradually slowed down. As the head of the family, his self control was evidently pretty good.

He solemnly sat back on his chair and asked in a hoarse voice: “Were you ambushed by the Lin Family?”

Lei Pi’s facial expression was pained as he slowly shook his head and said: “Before Lin Xiao and the rest arrived, we had already suffered such losses. This time, all of our members, including Lei Xing, died at the hands of Lin Dong.”

Even though they could sense the tense atmosphere, when they heard these words, the Lei Family members involuntarily lifted

their head in shock. How could so many people died at the hands of a sixteen, seventeen year old brat?

“Give me an explanation.” Lei Bao’s hands were trembling as he lifted his head and sucked in a deep breath before he asked in a deep yet trembling tone.

“Lin Dong’s current strength should be Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage. If we were to duel one on one, I am afraid that I would not be his match. Furthermore, he seems to specialize in utilizing hidden weapons. Due to a moment of negligence, Lei Xing was killed by him.” Lei Pi said in a low voice before he promptly took out a bloodied shrapnel from his sleeves and respectfully handed it to Lei Bao.

A dark expression on his face, Lei Bao received the item and gently traced its razor sharp edges with his fingers. The shrapnel was lined with small jagged teeth which enhanced the lethality of this an extremely deadly weapon.

“At the end of the day, you were too careless. Even if that Lin Family brat was really at Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage, with you and Lei Xing together, it should have been enough to kill him.” Lei Bao replied in an icy voice.

“Go and rest first. Let’s shelve this matter for now. Once we have destroyed the Lin Family, you will receive your due punishment.”

“Yes.”

Lei Pi did not dare to object but instead respectfully acknowledged.

“Gather all the men from the Lei Family and notify the Xie Family. In two month, I want to destroy the entire Lin Family!”

As Lei Bao’s finger gently tapped on the shrapnel in his hand, a malevolent look surfaced on his face. With a jerk of his arm, that shrapnel turned into a black shadow as it viciously flew and penetrated into a pillar!

.....

“What? The Lei Family dared to attack Dong-er?!”

In the Steel Wood Manor, Lin Zhentian’s originally smiling face immediately turned solemn when heard Lin Xiao’s report.

“Haha Father, do not worry. Not only did Lei Pi and Lei Xing fail completely, but Lei Xing was even killed by Dong-er, while Lei Pi was injured and forced to flee. This time, I am afraid that old ghost Lei Bao will be so angry that he will vomit blood.” Lin Xiao smiled as he said.

Lin Xiao’s words caused the entire hall to turn silent. Promptly, he saw astonished looks on Lin Zhentian and the rest.

“This brat is truly incredible.”

The astonishment lasted for a good while before the crowd gradually regained their wits. Their mouths hung wide open as a look of awe and delight surfaced on their faces.

“Father, it seems like the Lei Family intends to go to war with our Lin Family. What should we do?” A cold light flashed in his eyes as Lin Mang asked.

“Yes.” Lin Zhentian gently nodded his head. Then, with a smile, he said: “Based on Lei Bao’s character, there is no way that he would so easily swallow such a huge loss. Instruct the rest of the family to stay in high alert and keep close tabs on the Lei Family.”

“Father, when will you advance to Yuan Dan Stage?” Lin Xiao inquired. Yuan Dan Stage was a groundbreaking advancement. If Lin Zhentian successfully broke through, then the Lei Family would never dare to offend them again.

“I am almost there. In one or two month, I will definitely breakthrough!” Lin Zhentian’s eyes shined as he slowly responded.

“When that time comes, I am curious to see if the Lei Family still dares to be so arrogant!”

...

Due to the fact that he was ambushed by the Lei Family, Lin Dong decided to return to the Steel Wood Manor. Right now, it was the

most heavily fortified property of the Lin Family. Therefore, it was the safest place to be.

In the room, Lin Dong was seated on his bed. Nine “Shattered Yuan Shrapnel” hovered before him. These shrapnels floated around Lin Dong’s body as they swam about like fishes. Their stealthy movements looked extremely nimble.

After today’s intense battle, Lin Dong had witnessed first hand the might of Mental Energy. Furthermore, with the aid of Mental Energy, these “Shattered Yuan Shrapnel” turned into deadly and lethal weapons. It was difficult for others to discern their trajectories. Even a powerful foe like Lei Pi had suffered immense damage. In fact, Lei Xing had even paid for this lesson with his life.

Lin Dong closed his eyes as he felt the Mental Energy residing in his Ni Wan Palace. He was very clear about the fact that his control over Mental Energy was still rather lacking. If he was able to fully display the strength of his Mental Energy, he believed that Lei Pi would have definitely not been able to escape.

“Previously, I have underestimated Mental Energy...” Lin Dong softly sighed. No wonder Master Ruo in Yan City had mentioned that inscribing symbols on weapons was not the only ability of Symbol Masters. Their powers could also move mountains and part seas.

However, it seems like the current Lin Dong was still completely unable to accomplish these feats.

As he thought of this, Lin Dong helpless shook his head. Then, as if he suddenly recalled something, he somewhat curiously took out the Ancient Wooden Block covered in moss from his Qian Kun Bag.

This Ancient Wooden Block was something that he had bought from the underground bazaar today. The mysterious symbols inscribed on this item seemed to be related to Symbol Masters...

Right now, what Lin Dong most sorely lacked, were items connected to Symbol Masters. After all, he was very keen to find out; when he could fully display his current Mental Energy, what level of power would it reach?

Chapter 84: Ancient Swirl Symbol

Lin Dong examined and fiddled with the Ancient Wooden Block, carefully scraping off the moss on its surface while he wondered how the seller managed to find such an item in the first place. The symbols inscribed on it seemed particularly blurrish.

As he stared at these mostly blurred Symbols, Lin Dong furrowed his eyebrows. With a sigh, he concentrated as he gradually closed his eyes. A stream of Mental Energy emerged from his Ni Wan Palace before finally coming into contact with the Ancient Wooden Block.

In the moment when they made contact, the all along silent Ancient Wooden Block suddenly vibrated a little. However, no other major changes were observed.

“Something inside this Ancient Wooden Block is being locked by a layer of Mental Energy.”

From this interaction, Lin Dong clearly sensed that the surface of this Ancient Wooden Block was actually being covered by a thin layer of Mental Energy. That layer of Mental Energy seemed rather weak, as if it was placed there a long time ago.

As he prodded to test the fragility of that Mental Energy barrier, Lin Dong heaved a sigh of relief. In a flash, the Mental Energy inside his Ni Wan Palace immediately responded to his call as he viciously directed a concentrated blow towards the Ancient Wooden Block.

“Buzz!”

While Lin Dong attempted to forcefully breakthrough the barrier, that Ancient Wooden Block suddenly emitted a buzzing sound. Soon after, a soft “ka-chak” sound sounded out. Immediately, streams of light began to emerge on the surface of that Ancient Wooden Block before they eventually converged together to form a beam of light that shone directly on Lin Dong’s forehead.

When that light beam shone on Lin Dong’s forehead, he became aware that this was a unique communication method as information swiftly gushed into his mind.

Ancient Swirl Symbol, Congealing Symbol Art.

These few words caused Lin Dong’s heart to begin palpitating. The so-called Congealing Symbol Art was considered one of the most important steps to become a full-fledged Symbol Master. That was because, only when one was able to condense his Mental Energy into a Destiny Symbol, could he be called a true Symbol Master!

Master Ruo from Yan City had only given the first three parts of “Spiritual Movement Chapter” to Lin Dong. Even though this allowed Lin Dong to begin practising Mental Energy, it did not impart to him the most important Congealing Symbol Art. Therefore, although Lin Dong knew that his Mental Energy was extremely strong, in the end, he could not consider himself as a

Symbol Master.

Once one was able to successfully form a Destiny Symbol, it would not only greatly boost his control over Mental Energy, but also strengthen his Mental Energy tremendously.

Furthermore, if the Destiny Symbol was not inherited, the Symbol condensed would differ. Some would be stronger, while others would be weaker. Occasionally, some mistakes would occur as well. Therefore, as one trains to become a Symbol Master, having an experienced mentor would greatly boost one's progress.

However, the current Lin Dong did not have the luxury of a mentor. The only thing he could do was to explore and learn on his own. Thus when he realized that there was a Congealing Symbol Art hidden in this ancient wooden block, he was extremely delighted.

Slowly receiving the information, Lin Dong carefully pondered over it for half an hour before slowly opening his eyes. It seems like he had understood a fair bit. After reading through this "Ancient Swirl Symbol", it had cleared up many queries and questions he previously had regarding Mental Energy.

"Huff."

As he spat out a mouthful of air, Lin Dong closed his eyes again as the Mental Energy in his Ni Wan Palace slowly began to swirl.

“Swoosh swoosh...”

As the Mental Energy in his Ni Wan Palace began to rotate vigorously, a unique sound echoed in Lin Dong’s mind.

Lin Dong had a serious expression on his face. Even though this was his first time condensing the Destiny Symbol, he had exceptional faith in his own abilities.

When that unique sound gradually echoed about until Lin Dong’s ears began to buzz, a light flashed in his eyes as the rotation speed of his Mental Energy became slightly unstable.

While the rotational speed fell, it seemed to follow an exceptionally special tempo. Of course, Lin Dong was merely following the instructions on the “Ancient Swirl Symbol”. If not, he would never have dreamt of doing such a thing.

As the Mental Energy inside his Ni Wan Palace continued to spin at this unusual tempo, suddenly, Lin Dong faintly felt a slight suction force emerge at the epicenter of his Mental Energy swirl.

“Condense!”

When that gentle suction force appeared, Lin Dong opened his eyes and released a soft gasp as he controlled the Mental Energy in his mind, forcefully compressing it!

“Buzz buzz!”

Just as that Mental Energy Swirl was being gradually compressed to its limit, inside his Ni Wan Palace, a buzzing sound like that of the bees and birds emerged. The originally stable Mental Energy Swirl began to exhibit signs of resistance.

A stern expression hung on Lin Dong's face. He knew that this moment was the most critical moment when one attempts to condense the Destiny Symbol. Thus, he could not afford to make any mistakes now!

“You will condense!”

As he sucked in a deep breath, another angry roar sounded out from Lin Dong. A violent Mental Energy shockwave erupted in his mind. Right now, inside his Ni Wan Palace, a dying bird's cry was echoing from the Mental Energy Swirl. Then, with a bang, his Mental Energy Swirl exploded.

Just as his Mental Energy Swirl exploded, Lin Dong's eyes turned increasingly bright.

“Buzz buzz!”

At the epicenter of the explosion, numerous tiny light rays suddenly emerged. These light rays instantaneously connected pieces of Mental Energy debris together before it proceeded to pull them back and compress them. In the end, a mystical thumb-sized Symbol was formed!

That Symbol was formed by pieces of Mental Energy debris and it gave off an extremely profound feeling when one looked at it. That sensation was as if all the knowledge in Heaven and Earth was contained in this seemingly simple symbol.

When this symbol was formed, it looked extremely dim and blurry. However, if one took a closer look, one would realize this Mental Energy was actually a distorted vortex. Light constantly flickered within, like a quietly growing black hole.

“Hiss hiss!

A mysterious suction force emerged from the center of that peculiar Symbol. All the Mental Energy debris floating in Lin Dong’s Ni Wan Palace was instantly absorbed by the Symbol. Only then, did the Symbol brighten slightly.

“Huff...”

Just as that vortex-like Symbol was formed, Lin Dong’s eyes opened wide. In that moment, Lin Dong could clearly feel every little movement in the Steel Wood Manor. In fact, even the soft sounds of breathing could not escape his detection.

Suddenly, his hand slapped on the bed as he leapt off. In a flash, nine black shadows immediately flew out from his sleeves before they promptly merged together, forming an object shaped like a black sword which landed at Lin Dong’s feet.

After that, by utilizing these “Shattered Yuan Shrapnel”, Lin Dong actually manage to make his body float in mid-air!

Flying on an imperial carriage!

After he successfully condensed the Destiny Symbol, Lin Dong’s mastery of Mental Energy had increased by leaps and bounds!

Chapter 85: First Seal Symbol Master

Lin Dong carefully controlled the ‘black sword’ that was put together by the ‘Shattering Yuan Shrapnel’ as he drifted once around the room. Although the posture that he used to control it could be rated as ugly, it did not obstruct the unrestrained joy on the young man’s face as he drove and travelled around with the sword. He did not expect that he could actually succeed in doing this fairy-tale like thing.

After Lin Dong stepped on the ‘Shattering Yuan Shrapnel’ and floated once around the room, a thought struck him. That ‘black sword’ was separated and once again transformed into nine black things that entered his sleeves. His body also dexterously landed on the ground.

“It’s really not bad. But it really consumes Mental Energy...”

Lin Dong patted his hands, feeling a little regretful while still being amazed. If his Mental Energy could be a little stronger, he might be able to flying around in the sky like those legendary heros. Currently, it was likely that his Mental Strength would be completely exhausted after flying for a short while, resulting in him falling from the sky.

Once he kept the Shattering Yuan Shrapnel, Lin Dong observed the Destiny Symbol within his Ni Wan Palace. At this moment, the Destiny Symbol was suspended within it. At a glance, however, this symbol appeared overly blurry and dim. It required Lin Dong to train it over a long time before it could completely coagulate into a Destiny Symbol.

“One Seal...”

Eyeing the Destiny Symbol within the Ni Wan Palace, Lin Dong could not resist smiling. From now onwards, he could also be considered as an official First Seal Symbol Master. He was not too interested in inscribing things like armour or weapons but he was very interested regarding in the potential of the Mental Energy. As that Grandmaster Yan had said, this power was indeed not weaker than those strong people who trained in Yuan Power. Once one reaches an advanced stage, flipping mountains or toppling the seas was merely something that could be done with a thought.

However, Mental Energy appeared to be a little emptier and more ethereal when compared to the tangible Yuan Power. If one did not possess talent for it, it was likely that one would have difficulty making any progress.

Talent was extremely important in the training of Mental Energy. This was also the reason why Grandmaster Yan was so moved when he saw the Mental Energy talent that Lin Dong had displayed.

The kind of heavenly strength to flip lakes and topple the sea was something that Lin Dong could only maintain a yearning for at the moment. Fortunately, however, he was able to clearly sense that his control over the Mental Energy after the Destiny Symbol had successfully coagulate, was clearly superior than what it was before. He had the confidence that if he was to once again meet the kind of ambush by Lei Pi, the latter would definitely have no chance of escaping.

Lin Dong felt extremely satisfied regarding this point. The actions of Lei Pi's group this time around, was a clear prelude to their intention to attack the Lin Family. When facing this veteran family within the Qingyang Town, the Lin Family must go all out. After all, if they were not careful, they may really end up with ruin and death.

Once the Lin Family was in ruins, the Lei Family would annihilate all of them. That was something that Lin Dong definitely did not want to see.

Therefore, Lin Dong must do whatever he could to raise his strength before the Lei Family attacks the Lin Family. Only by doing this, can they have an additional safeguard.

“Lei Family...”

Lin Dong's eyes narrowed. A cold glint flowed within them. When faced with those people who possessed real killing intent towards him, Lin Dong would view them as enemies. Once he had the chance, he would let the Lei Family pay the price for today's action.

...

In the days that followed, the atmosphere within Qingyang Town appeared to have quietly become a little anxious. The interactions between the upper echelons of the Lei and Xie Families had also become increasingly frequent. Some of the groups which were very

well informed, could also sense that there was something amiss.

Of course, the Lin Family had also sensed this abnormality. As they were pressed for time and since Lin Zhentian had once again entered a crucial moment of his retreat, no one dared to disturb him at this moment. This was because everyone knew that only when Lin Zhentian entered the Yuan Dan stage, would the Lin Family no longer need to fear the Lei and Xie Families forming an alliance. Otherwise, if they were to fight at this moment, the chances of the Lin Family winning would not be high.

After all, it could be said that although the Lin Family's foundation was not weaker than any of the Lei or Xie Family due to the Yang Yuan Stone Lode, they were still somewhat at a disadvantage if the two families were to cooperate.

Therefore, they must wait for Lin Zhentian to successfully exit his retreat regardless of what happened.

...

Being affected by the spreading atmosphere within Qingyang Town, the Steel Wood Manor had also appeared unusually alert. The normal defence had been increased by several times. Even during the night, there would be people continuing to patrol.

Under this kind of tensed atmosphere, another half a month swiftly flowed by.

On a cool shady empty plot of land, Lin Dong's body was like a sky rabbit, as his fists and palms were being thrown, carrying a billowing palm wind that softly and deeply hummed as it sent all the dead leaves on the ground flying.

“Bang.”

In the next instance, Lin Dong threw a fierce punch that struck on a large tree. The violent Yuan Power directly convulsed the latter until it cracked and burst opened.

“Lin Dong-ge, Father and the others are calling you to hurry to the Meeting Room!”

At the moment Lin Dong pulled his fist back, a slim figure suddenly came running over. A clear voice that was like a lark began spreading in the Lin Family grounds.

“Oh?”

Hearing this, Lin Dong was momentarily stunned. Immediately after, he swiftly nodded his head. He knew that in the current tensed state the Lin Family was in, there were many things to be done.

“Let's go.”

Lin Dong waved his hand at Qing Tan beside him. Without much hesitation, he turned around and ran towards the direction where

the Meeting Room was at. When the young girl saw the situation, her small mouth pouted. She then hurriedly followed.

Meeting Room.

When Lin Dong entered, he realised that not only were Lin Xiao and the others (older generation) there but that younger generation like Lin Hong was also present. However, everyone's expressions were fairly dark. Seeing this scene, Lin Dong's heart quietly beat harder.

“What happened.?” Lin Dong sped up his footsteps, walked in and asked.

Seeing Lin Dong walking in, Lin Xiao's and Lin Ken's three men group quietly sighed in relief. Without realising it, they appeared to have treated Lin Dong as a pillar of the Lin Family.

“During this period of time, we have secretly moved the family members of the Lin Family from Qingyang Town towards the Steel Wood Manor one after another.”

Hearing this, Lin Dong nodded his head. Since the Lei Family could even directly attack him, using other methods were very common. If those family members were captured by the Lei Family, it would greatly handicap the Lin Family, should the former use those people to threaten them when the time comes.

“As we are worried of being discovered by the Lei and Xie Family,

the efficiency isn't very high. Today's the last batch. However, the Lei and Xie Families discovered it this time around. According to the information that we have received, the Lei Family is currently sending people to pursue the last batch of family members from our Lin Family!" Lin Xiao said with a gloomy face.

Lin Dong knitted his eyebrows. Looking at Lin Xia by the side who still had some traces of tears on her face and the gloomy faced Lin Xiao, he suddenly felt a little uneasy. "Who are amongst the last batch of family members?"

"Most of them are females. Elder sister-in-law and your mother are all within them." Lin Xiao's body trembled slightly. His low voice was a little frightening to listen to.

The elder sister-in-law that he spoke of was natural Lin Ken's wife and Lin Xia's mother.

"Mother?" Lin Dong's face changed slightly. His fist immediately tightened and his expression became dark.

"This time around, the Xie Family is personally lead by Xie Qian. We wanted to inform the Raging Blade Dojo but the Lei clan are watching them closely. Therefore, they cannot act." Lin Ken's expression was extremely ugly at the moment.

"That Xie Qian possess a late stage Heavenly Yuan Level ability. At the very least, it requires Lin Xiao and I to personally take action in order to stop him. However, once we go, the defence of the Steel Wood Manor would be weakened. Currently, your

grandfather is in the most crucial stage and not a single slip can happen!”

Once Lin Ken’s words fell, the entire hall was a complete silence. His words implied that they could not spare the manpower to rescue those people...

The tears in Lin Xia’s eyes once again rolled down, as she bit her lips and stared at Lin Ken intently.

Lin Ken tightened his fist and closed his eyes tightly. His face was filled with pain and bitterness. The Lei and Xie Families had already planned to attack the Lin Family. Their only hope was that Lin Zhentian could make a break through to the Yuan Dan stage. Otherwise, even if they managed to rescue the family members, it would only result in a similar ending.

“Father, the both of you should guard the Steel Metal Manor. I will go to where Mother is!”

Within the silence, the young man’s tone had a dark and cold killing intent seeping out from it as it reverberated throughout the hall.

Chapter 86: Reinforcement

“Send you?”

In the large hall, after they heard Lin Dong’s words, many of their expressions changed. With a stern expression on his face, Lin Xiao turned to look at Lin Ken and the trio, before he solemnly said: “The man in charge over there, is Xie Qian from the Xie Family. That smiling tiger is at Heavenly Yuan Late Stage. He cannot be compared to Lei Pi and the rest!”

“Then who would go?” Lin Dong calmly replied.

Upon hearing these words, Lin Xiao and the rest fell silent, as they were at a loss for words.

“Should we just sit by and let Mother be captured by Lei and Xie Family?”

“Even if we will lose, just let me lead a team. At the cost of my life, I will bring them back.” Lin Mang who was always silent, suddenly echoed. In his eyes, a vicious glint sparkled. Since the Lei and Xie Family were intent on destroying their Lin Family, the only option they had was to fight with them till the bitter end.

Lin Xiao and Lin Ken took in a deep breath. They knew that if Lin Mang led the expedition, he could probably save the rest. However, he would likely be unable to return.

The large hall fell silent again, as Lin Xiao and Lin Ken tried to maintain their composure. Right now, their Lin Family was in extreme danger. One misstep, could potentially lead to their destruction.

“Father, I can kill Lei Xing and injure Lei Pi. That means that I am more powerful than all of you!” Lin Dong stared straight at Lin Xiao and the trio, as he gradually said.

Even though his words were slightly hurtful, Lin Xiao and the rest could not retort. After all, Lin Dong’s current strength did most likely surpassed theirs.

“I shall arrange an elite team to follow you!”

As he stared at that skinny youth standing in the middle of the hall, Lin Xiao finally decided not to hesitate further, as he shouted.

Standing aside, Lin Ken and Lin Mang talked among themselves, with their eyebrows furrowed. In the end, both of them gradually nodded their heads.

Lin Xiao was a man of his word. Once he made his decision, he immediately summoned the guards. Instantly, approximately twenty elite guards from the Lin Family were gathered at the hall, as they awaited instructions.

“Swish!”

As he stared at his crew, Lin Dong nodded his head, as a whistle echoed from his mouth. Promptly, a low tiger growl sounded out in the manor, as a red shadow that looked like a ball of fire, swiftly appeared in front of Lin Dong's vision. It was naturally Little Flame.

“Follow me!”

Lin Dong leapt onto the tiger's back. With a cold glint in his eyes, without further ado, he waved his head, and instructed the team to follow him, as he swiftly left the manor.

“Lin Dong, take care!”

As she stared at that scrawny, yet somewhat comforting youth's shadow, Lin Xia wiped the tears off her eyes, as she shouted.

“Don't worry. I will get them all back safely!”

The young man seated on the tiger's back did not turn his head around. Rather, he merely lifted and waved his hand. Then, kicking off a storm of yellow dust, he immediately dashed out of the house. Behind him, several elite Lin Family guards also swiftly followed behind him, creating a menacing aura.

As they stared at the group of people swiftly departing, Lin Xiao and the rest's began to slowly grip their palms.

...

On a mountain road several miles away from the Steel Wood Manor, a large number of people were nervously travelling along that path. Among that group, were several armed guards. Right now, they were cautiously scanning their surroundings constantly.

“Ji!”

As they travelled rapidly, suddenly a grey figure rushed out from the woods, and landed into the arms of one of the armed guards. As the latter took a look, his face turned slightly pale.

“What happened?” Upon witnessing this sight, amongst the crowd, a lady with a good figure, immediately asked as she raised her eyebrows. She was Lin Dong’s mother, Liu Yan.

“The people behind, they are all dead.” That middle aged man named Luo Ling gently exhaled, with an ugly expression on his face. Meanwhile, his rugged giant hands gradually gripped onto the giant sabre drenched with blood, hanging on his waist.

“The Xie Family is pursuing and killing us with no mercy. Right now, we are far slower than them. Later, I will stay behind with some other guards to halt them. Madam, please hurry and rush towards to the Steel Wood Manor. Once you arrive there, you guys will be in safe hands.”

Liu Yan exchanged glances with a lady nearby, dressed in silk robes, before they both silently nodded their heads. Then, they both silently touched the dagger hidden in their sleeves. That was

their final alternative. If they were really captured by the Xie Family, they would definitely not allow the Xie Family to use them as bargaining chips.

“Everyone ready up. Escort the Madams!” Luo Ling was a decisive man, as he immediately drew the sabre from his waist and shouted.

Upon hearing these words, the rest of the guards gritted their teeth, as a vicious expression surfaced on their faces.

“Swoosh Swoosh!”

Just as the rest of the guards prepared to stop and intercept the Xie Family’s troops, several arrows flew out from the forest behind. Instantly several men were penetrated by these arrows, as fresh blood gushed from their bodies.

“Take care! Stay in formation to protect them!”

After witnessing this scene, Luo Ling’s facial expression changed as he quickly shouted out.

“Haha, with me Xie Qian personally in charge. If I can’t even take on small fries like you, that would definitely be a joke?” Just as Luo Ling shouted, sounds of breaking wind sounded out from the forest. Immediately, a figure dashed out from the woods, and landed steadily on the ground. With a smile on his face, he turned to face Luo Lin and the rest. This person, was indeed the patriarch

of the Xie Family, Xie Qian.

Standing behind Xie Qian, dozens of men swiftly followed they stood in formation and surrounded Luo Ling and the rest.

“Surrender them, and I may let you live.” Xie Qian looked at Luo Ling, as he said with a smile.

“I will give you your Mother!” Luo Ling spat in disgust towards Xie Qian.

Xie Qian gently retreated two steps and avoided the spit. The smile on his face did not change. As he looked right at Luo Ling, with a gentle smile he said: “Later, when I capture you. You will wish you were dead.”

“Kill them!”

After he heard Xie Qian’s casual words, the Xie Family guards gushed out, as they approached the convoy menacingly.

“Dash out!”

After witnessing this scene, Luo Ling gritted his teeth as he shouted. Then, he immediately took charge and led the crew directly towards the surrounding guards.

“Clash clash!”

As the two armies collided, the sound of blade penetrating flesh immediately followed, as fresh blood was continuously spilled. The smell of blood immediately filled this part of the forest.

“Kill!”

Right now, Luo Ling's eyes were dyed with blood. Like a maniac wild beast, the giant sabre in his hand was undulated with a thick Yuan Power, as he manically swung at his enemies. As he was Earthly Yuan Late Stage, several guards from the Xie Family were directly sliced into half by him. However, the number of guards beside him, gradually began to decrease amongst this frantic attempt.

“Clash.”

Suddenly, another figure appeared in front him. With a bloody red glint in his eyes, Luo Ling raised his sabre. However, this time, a massive force suddenly erupted. Instantly, he spit out a mouth of fresh blood, as his body was immediately blown away and flew into the crowd, just like a kite whose string was broken.

Xie Qian gently fiddled with the long sword in his hand. Then, as he casually looked at Luo Ling, who was now struggling to get back up, he pointed his fingers towards him, as the blade broken sword in his hand instantly turned into a flash, and swiftly flew towards the latter's head.

As he stared at that blade gradually becoming bigger in his eyes,

Luo Ling began to sense that his end was approaching. However, right now he was totally helpless to fight back, and he could only gradually close his eyes. With a sigh in his heart, his only regret was that he failed to accomplish his mission...

“Ding!”

Just as Luo Ling closed his eyes and prepared to meet his maker, suddenly a black flash erupted from the forest nearby, before it heavily collided with that blade, and forcefully blew it away.

“Who?!”

Upon witnessing this sight, Xie Qian’s facial expression turned cold instantly.

“Your Father!”

Xie Qian’s shout was rewarded with a chuckle. Soon after, a red figure swiftly dashed out from the woods, accompanied by a tiger roar, as it landed dramatically in front of Luo Ling, Liu Yan and the rest.

The crowd hurriedly turned to look, only to see that seated on that tiger’s back, was a skinny young man. With an icy look on his face, a menacing aura was slowly spreading out!

Chapter 87: Holding Them Back

“Lin Dong!”

When he saw the youth seated on the tiger's back, Xie Qian's facial expression changed slightly. Since they had a close relationship with the Lei Family, he naturally knew that Lin Dong had managed to kill Lei Xing and also injure Lei Pi. When he first heard the story, he could not believe his ears. However, recent events had gradually convinced him and now he had begun to fear and respect that particular younger generation member from the Lin Family.

“Dong-er.”

Once she saw Lin Dong's figure, Liu Yan, who was in the rear, did not become elated. Rather, she turned anxious. In her heart, she clearly knew how powerful Xie Qian was and she did not want to see any mishap happen to Lin Dong.

“Mother. Don't worry. I will be fine.”

Lin Dong also turned his head and smiled at Liu Yan. Then with a wave of his arm, a dozen figures swiftly dashed out from the woods and formed a protective barrier around Liu Yan and the rest. Meanwhile, they also attended to the wounded Lin Family guards.

As he stared at the bodies of the wounded and dead Lin Family guards, Lin Dong pursed his lips as an icy cold glint emerged in his eyes. Promptly, his vision turned to focus on Xie Qian as he

muttered: “The Xie and Lei Family are thieves in cahoots. Both of you are equally despicable.”

“Heh. Even your Father would not dare to take on such a tone with me. You little bastard, you really have such poor manners.” Even though Xie Qian was a shrewd person, when he saw a young brat acting in such a haughty manner towards him, his facial turned dark as he chuckled.

“Respect is earned. Since you are so shameless, why should I bother respecting you?”

Lin Dong mockingly shook his head. Immediately, his gaze turned to scan the surroundings. The Xie Family had mobilized a relatively large force this time, however they only had one Heavenly Yuan Late Stage expert. Perhaps, they thought that it would be sufficient.

“You little brat. Do you really think you can act haughty in front of me just because you have a little power? Well, I was only planning on capturing some small fries. However, now that you have delivered yourself willingly, I will not hesitate then!” Xie Qian sneered as he violently jerked his arm.

“Swoosh!”

As Xie Qian jerked his arm, in the surrounding woods arrows abruptly shot out. The arrows whistled through the air and flew towards Lin Dong and the rest.

“Snort!”

After witnessing this scene, Lin Dong chuckled coldly in his heart. Immediately, he fired off dozens of black shadows which instantly deflected all the arrows. Then, without slowing down, they viciously shot into the dense forests. Immediately, several screams echoed out..

“That brat is indeed good at utilizing hidden weapons!” After he heard the screams emitted from the dense woods, Xie Qian’s eyebrows furrowed slightly. Then, a cold smile surfaced on his face again. This time, he had brought a large army along. Therefore, there was no way that Lin Dong would successfully rescue these people from right under his nose.

“Kill!”

After Xie Qian shouted, the menacing Xie Family troops immediately tightened their grips on their weapons, ominous glints in their eyes as they dashed viciously towards Lin Dong and the rest.

“Watch out!”

When he saw the Xie Family troops rush over, the pale Luo Ling hurriedly warned them.

“Uncle Luo Ling, bring my mother and the rest back to the Steel Wood Manor. I will hold them back!” Lin Dong exhaled a deep

breath as he said in a low voice.

When they heard that Lin Dong was planning to cut off the enemy's advancement by himself, Luo Ling and the rest's facial expressions changed.

“Dong-er!” Liu Yan shouted in worry.

“Madam, rest assured. Young Master Lin Dong will be fine.” A guard sent from the Steel Wood Manor hurriedly stopped Liu Yan as he softly said.

“Alright. Young Master Lin Dong be careful!”

Upon hearing this particularly cool-headed Lin Family guard say such words, a flash of surprise surfaced in Luo Ling's eyes. However, without further ado, he immediately turned around and led the other guards, together with Liu Yan and the rest as they retreated into the dense forest.

Lin Dong jumped off Little Flame's back. As he clenched his fist, a sword lying on the ground, was instantly sucked into his palm. Thick Yuan Power swiftly gushed out from his Dan Tian as the leaves surrounding him were all completely blown away.

“Roar!”

At this moment, Little Flame released a deep tiger roar. As it leaned forward, an explosive power swiftly gathered in its body.

Right now, Little Flame was as powerful as a Heavenly Yuan Stage expert. In addition, its thick hide, nimble reflexes and lethal claws made it exceptionally deadly.

Grasping the sword in his hand, in the next moment, Lin Dong's figure flickered as he dashed towards the Xie Family's troops. The sword danced about, each stroke accompanied by a splash of blood.

“Bang bang!”

Compared to Lin Dong, Little Flame was evidently more dramatic. As its massive body collided with the guards, anyone that was hit by the latter, was either crushed to death by its gigantic paws or ripped to shreds by its bloody claws and teeth.

One man and one beast managed to directly hold back all the Xie Family's troops. Right now, corpses littered the battleground.

When he saw the casualties rapidly piling on, even Xie Qian could not tolerate anymore. With an angry roar, he swooped at Lin Dong like an eagle. A powerful force was generated by the large sabre in his hand as he swung his blade towards Lin Dong's head.

“Ding!”

Even though he was surrounded, thanks to the power of Mental Energy, everyone's moves was clearly reflected into Lin Dong's mind. Therefore, when Xie Qian suddenly attacked him, Lin Dong had already discovered it. Sword in hand, he precisely directed it

towards the sabre's edge. As two thick Yuan Power collided, a powerful eruption occurred as everyone within a few feet of them were forcefully blown back.

After that direct collision, Lin Dong gently retreated a few steps. At the same time, Xie Qian also did a somersault, before he landed on the ground. However, before he could engage Lin Dong again, the latter had already drifted in the crowd. With every swing of his blade, a blood followed.

“Bastard!”

When he saw that Lin Dong had no intention to fight with him directly, but was rather choosing to pick off the other elite members of his Xie Family, Xie Qian's face turned ashen as he dashed towards him. However, no matter how hard he chased, Lin Dong's figure was slippery just like a mudskipper. He was able to traverse through it smoothly in the chaotic battle field. Everywhere his figure emerged, the Xie Family members were forced to retreat in haste.

“Ding Ding Ding!”

Just as the Xie Family members planned to retreat, from inside the thick forest, Lin Dong once again stealthily fired off several black shadows which ruthlessly pierced through several people's throats

Under the assault of one man and one beast, within just ten minutes, the Xie Family had already lost half of their troops. Right

now, Xie Qian was furious. He knew that since he was at Heavenly Yuan Later Stage, he could definitely tie Lin Dong down. However, the latter was extremely devious. Each time he tried to pursue him, Lin Dong's movements would become slightly strange as he easily evaded him.

“Swish!”

After he fought with them for a while more, Lin Dong calculated the time in his head. Right now, Liu Yan and the rest should be a safe distance away from them. Immediately, a whistle sounded out from his lips, as he stomped the ground. Then, his body floated off, before he directly flew towards the thick forests. At the same time, Little Flame transformed into a fiery red shadow as it followed him into the woods. The rest of the Xie Family troops stared in fear at the corpses littered on the ground, none of them dared to pursue.

“Pursue them!”

Xie Qian had a dark expression on his face. This was the first time he had been humiliated so utterly and it was even at the hands of a youth. He could not let it end this way thus he immediately shouted out. The men immediately dashed into the woods and chased after Lin Dong.

When he dashed into the woods, Xie Qian immediately saw a red shadow nearby. With a menacing glint in his eyes, he immediately chased after it.

However, just as Xie Qian was travelling across the woods,

something suddenly flashed towards him, causing him to hastily retreat.

“Ding!”

As the Steel Sword was covered with a thick Yuan Power, Xie Qian’s hands felt slightly numb after the collision. He retreated and gritted his teeth as he shouted: “What a sneaky little bastard!”

Only now did he understand that Lin Dong did not plan on retreating immediately, but rather he planned to ambush him in the woods. If he had reacted any slower previously, right now, Xie Qian would probably be heavily injured.

“Blasted Xie, you will not be so lucky next time...”

Just as Xie Qian hastily retreated, Lin Dong emerged from the woods as he sneered at the former. Then, he turned and dashed into the thick forest. Swiftly mounting a red figure as they rapidly disappeared in front of Xie Qian’s eyes.

“You little bastard. I swear I will rip you to shreds!”

Gazing Lin Dong’s disappearing figure, Xie Qian was ashen faced as his angry roars constantly ricocheted in these thick forests.

Chapter 88: Breakthrough

Like a fireball, a red shadow dashed through the dense forests. Seated atop the tiger's back, Lin Dong could not help but chuckle as he heard the furious roars that sounded out from behind them.

Although he was still stuck at Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage, if Lin Dong used Mental Energy attacks, killing Xie Qian was not impossible. It was just that his current objective was to protect Liu Yan and the rest as they travelled to the Steel Wood Manor, not to excessively tangle with Xie Qian and his forces. Else, the Xie Family forces today would have been wiped clean.

While Lin Dong played with this thought, Little Flame charged out of the forest. Instantly, his view became much clearer. As Lin Dong lifted his head, he found Liu Yan and the rest anxiously standing on a small hill nearby.

“Young Master Lin Dong is back!”

Out of the corner of his eye, Luo Ling quickly spotted the red shadow that was dashing towards them. Immediately, ecstasy filled his face as he shouted out.

Upon hearing his shout, Liu Yan and the rest promptly turned to check that the youngster was safe and sound before letting out heavy sighs of relief.

“Uncle Luo Ling, let's go.”

Like a whirlwind, Little Flame flew up the small hill while Lin Dong casually tossed aside the blood stained sword in his hand as he smiled at Luo Ling and said.

Luo Ling's gaze swept across Lin Dong's body, the latter's body was covered in blood and chunks of flesh could be seen in Little Flame's mouth. It looked like they had been through an extremely desperate battle. Yet, what caused Luo Ling to be apprehensive was the fact that Lin Dong seemed to be vigorous and lively, without looking the slightest bit tired or weak even after such a huge fight.

“Young Master Lin Dong, what happened to the troops from the Xie Family?” Luo Ling cautiously asked.

“Half of them should be dead and Xie Qian should probably not dare to chase us.” Lin Dong casually replied.

At these words, Luo Ling's face involuntarily trembled. Only then did he understand the confidence behind these guards. It turns out that the strength of this Young Master from the Lin Family had already reached a rather high level.

Though the very notion of reaching such a level of strength at this young age was unfathomable, Luo Ling quickly accepted this fact. The fact that Lin Dong had killed half of the Xie Family men under Xie Qian's watch was testament to Lin Dong's strength. Even someone as strong as Xie Qian was unable to do anything.

“Mother, everything is fine now. Let's return to the Steel Wood

Manor.” Lin Dong beamed at Liu Yan as he said.

“This child.” As she looked at Lin Dong, who was covered in blood, Liu Yan felt a pang in her heart as her eyes reddened. She took a towel from one side and tried to wipe him clean.

Lin Dong let Liu Yan help him wipe away the blood stains before waving his hand, leading the group as they swiftly hurried towards the Steel Wood Manor. About two hours later, the Steel Wood Manor appeared at the edges of their sight.

On top of the Steel Wood Manor walls, Lin Xiao and the rest had been fretfully waiting ever since Lin Dong had brought the men and left. However, this fretfulness finally scattered in the wind when they saw the familiar group of faces appear in the distance.

“Each wave is pushed by the one behind it, this brat is really something...” Gazing at the rapidly approaching red shadow, Lin Mang could not help but let out a soft sigh. They completely understood just how strong Xie Qian was, despite this, Lin Dong had once again gifted them with a pleasant surprise.

With Lin Dong in the lead, this last batch of Lin Family women and children successfully entered into the Steel Wood Manor. Hearing the cheers from all around them, Lin Dong could not help but humbly scratch his head.

“Mother!”

Lin Xia speedily jumped down from the manor walls before throwing herself into embrace of one of the women that travelled with Liu Yan, tears continuously flowing out. This time, the fright she had suffered was not little.

“Lin Dong, thank you.”

Lin Xia snuggled in her mother’s embrace for a while before turning to lightly hug Lin Dong as she said in a soft voice.

“We are family, no need for any thanks.” Lin Dong chuckled in response.

“Dong-er, are you alright?” Lin Xiao and the rest also crowded over, somewhat nervously looking at Lin Dong, who was covered in blood, as they asked.

Gazing at Lin Xiao and the rest’s somewhat nervous gazes, Lin Dong smiled and shook his head.

Upon realizing that Lin Dong was fine, Lin Xiao and the rest also let out a sigh of relief.

“That bastard Xie Qian, we will definitely settle this grudge with them!” Lin Ming rather ominously declared.

“We just need to wait for Father to successfully make a breakthrough, then we no longer need to fear the Lei and Xie Families. When the time comes, our Lin family would even have a

chance to establish ourselves in Yan City. That level of development would be incomparable to what we have now.” Lin Xiao said.

“Okay. Over this period of time, I will send men to completely observe every little movement in the Lei and Xie Families.”

Lin Ken also nodded before once again closing the manor doors tightly, ordering the entire manor to enter into a state of high alert. Only then did he let this last batch of women and children enter deeper into manor to enjoy a good rest.

...

After all of the women and children had been recalled into the Steel Wood Manor, the Lin Family chose to tightly secure the manor, no longer making any contact with the Lei and Xie Families.

In response to this action by the Lin Family, the Lei and Xie Families unexpectedly also chose the same tactic of sealing themselves off instead of joining up to make a move against the Lin Family like some people had predicted. This strange situation caused the onlookers to be bewildered. After all, everyone knew that the Lin Family and the Lei and Xie Families were currently like fire and water. Given the temperament of the Lei Family, they would not so easily let the Lin Family off...

However, even though the actions of both sides were somewhat strange, some people still managed to sense the mutual hostility

between the two parties. The more sensitive ones understood that it was only a matter of time before the true battle between the two factions.

...

Under this kind of entrenched positions, another month passed in the blink of an eye.

Lin Dong was seated on a cliff of the mountains at the back of the Steel Wood Manor. From this high point, he was able to observe the entire Steel Wood Manor. Over this period of time, because he was afraid that Lin Zhentian would be disturbed while he closed himself off for training, even Lin Dong had secretly volunteered his services to monitor the surroundings of the Steel Wood Manor.

Yet, what caused him to be a little glad and puzzled was that the attack he anticipated had never come. The Lei and Xie Families were practically even more silent than the Lin Family during this period.

“What exactly are these guys up to now?” Lin Dong softly muttered to himself. The Lei and Xie Families were already treating the Lin Family as a thorn in their side. Thus they would definitely not give in so easily. Since this was so, it was highly likely that the Lei and Xie Families were hatching a plan of sorts.

“Wiping out my Lin Family would not be so easy.”

Lin Dong icily chuckled, a strange light flickering in his eyes. Over the past month, there was still no signs of a breakthrough in his Yuan Power training. However, he was becoming increasingly proficient in his control over Mental Energy. Combined with the fact that he had successfully condensed a Destiny Symbol, his Mental Energy had strengthened even further.

Currently, every time he used his full power to revolve the Mental Energy in his Ni Wan Palace, an extreme feeling of self-confidence would surge up in his heart. This level of confidence made Lin Dong feel that even a Heavenly Yuan Late Stage expert would be unable to contend against him.

“I wonder if my current Mental Energy is enough to battle against a genuine Yuan Dan practitioner?”

A passionate fire burned up in Lin Dong’s eyes. In the past, he would never have dared to even dream of such a possibility, but as he understood more and more about the strength of the Mental Energy in his body, the reverence he had for Yuan Dan Stage practitioners had decreased.

His heart was in a frenzy because of this thought, but soon after, Lin Dong helplessly gave up on the notion. A Yuan Dan Stage expert was not so easily found, even if he wanted to spar with one, he did not have the chance to do so.

“Looks like there should be no problems today.”

As he stood up, Lin Dong looked into the distance for a while

before smiling. He moved to return to the manor, however, in that moment, his keen senses caused his body to immediately freeze on the spot. In a flash of understanding, he turned towards one of the rooms deep in the Steel Wood Manor. There, a stifling Yuan Power wave violently surged forth!

“Such a strong Yuan Power undulation...”

Gazing at the Yuan Power spiral that had formed in mid-air at that deeper part of the Steel Wood Manor, Lin Dong involuntarily gasped. Soon after, euphoria bubbled up in his eyes. Lin Zhentian had finally made a breakthrough!

Chapter 89: Probe

A Yuan Power spiral that could be seen with the naked eye enveloped the skies over that quiet room. It was an especially mind-blowing sight, one that everyone here was personally seeing for the first time in their lives.

Like a tornado, the Yuan Power spiral's tail connected directly to that quiet room.

Such a shocking scene naturally aroused the attention of the entire manor in an instant. Almost everyone had run out of into the open and were gazing at the Yuan Power spiral that hovered in mid-air over that quiet room, stunned by the sight before their eyes.

“This is...”

Lin Xiao and the rest had likewise rushed out of their rooms at the earliest possible moment. When they saw that Yuan Power spiral, they were firstly alarmed, but soon after, ecstasy filled their faces.

“Father has succeeded!”

Excitement and ecstasy covered everyone's faces. Over this period of time, they had holed themselves up so securely because they were waiting for Lin Zhentian's breakthrough and fortunately, this day had finally come!

“In the future, we no longer need to worry about the Lei and Xie Families...” Lin Ken’s face was flushed red as he mumbled in excitement.

To one side, Lin Xiao and Lin Mang also forcefully nodded their heads. If a Family had a Yuan Dan Stage expert, their strength would practically have leaped forward. At that time, not mentioning Qingyang Town, the Lin Family would even have some influence in Yan City. After all, even the factions of Yan City did not all possess a Yuan Dan expert!

“After we take care of the Lei and Xie Families, our Lin Family will be able to use this place as our stronghold to establish a presence in Yan City. In that place, experts are as common as the clouds in the sky. Only with such an environment can our Lin Family growth accelerate.” Lin Xiao smiled and said.

“Agreed.”

Lin Ken and Lin Mang were also in favor of this idea. Even in the entire TianDu Region, Yan City was considered as an important city. If they were able to stabilize there and develop, the Lin Family’s strength would leap forward.

“Buzz!”

While Lin Xiao and the rest conversed in excitement and anticipation, the Yuan Power swirl above that quiet room suddenly trembled violently before transforming into pillars of Yuan Power

that could be seen by the naked eye.

“Swoosh!”

As the Yuan Power swirl transformed into rows of pillars, a figure abruptly burst out from the private room, dashed into the sky and opened his mouth to spit out a thumb sized ball of light.

At that light ball’s appearance, the numerous Yuan Power pillars were swiftly pulled towards it. In a few short minutes, all of the Yuan Power pillars had been sucked into that unremarkable looking small ball of light.

When the last Yuan Power pillar crammed itself into the light ball, that light ball shined increasingly brighter before the rays of light finally dispersed revealing the pure white thumb-sized bead that the light ball had transformed into.

“Is that the Dan Yuan?”

Lin Dong’s eyes were glued onto that tiny white bead. He could sense an extremely strong Yuan Power undulating from it. That kind of undulation was simply so much stronger than Heavenly Yuan Late Stage!

This should be the most obvious sign of a Yuan Dan Stage practitioner, condensing a Yuan Dan!

Lin Dong’s eyes slightly narrowed, through his outstanding

Mental Energy, he could sense that there were four exceedingly tiny star patterns on the surface of Lin Zhentian's Yuan Dan.

“Four Star Yuan Dan.”

At this sight, astonishment flashed across Lin Dong's eyes. When the Dan Yuan was condensed and formed, the importance of the Yin and Yang Energy from the Earthly Yuan and Heavenly Yuan stages respectively were finally shown.

Practitioners who were at the same Yuan Dan Stage had Yuan Dan's of different qualities and the most important factor that contributed to the quality of the Yuan Dan was Yin Yang Energy.

The quality of the Yuan Dan was measured using the scale of Nine Stars. The Yuan Dan that Lin Zhentian had just formed belonged to the category of Four Star Yuan Dan. This was not considered low, after all, the Yin and Yang Energies that Lin Zhentian used to absorb were merely the most normal kind within Heaven and Earth. If it were not for the fact that he had absorbed a large amount of special Yang Energy from the cave in the mine over this period of time, the quality of his Yuan Dan would at most have reached Two Stars.

Now, to be able to form a Four Star Yuan Dan, even Lin Zhentian himself felt especially astonished and pleasantly surprised.

In mid-air, Lin Zhentian opened his mouth and swallowed the Yuan Dan into his body. Light as a feather, he landed on a huge tree. Though a Yuan Dan Stage practitioner was able to float in the

air for a short period of time, he was still unable to reach the level of flying through the air.

After Lin Zhentian landed on the huge tree, he made no further movements. Yet, a special aura extended from his body which seemed to absorb and give out with Yuan Power.

Stepping into the Yuan Dan Stage was truly considered as reaching the next level in one's training.

“As expected of the Yuan Dan Stage, to actually be able to reach this step.” Lin Xiao and the rest looked on as Lin Zhentian absorbed and gave out Yuan Power, envy on their faces. The methods of a Yuan Dan Stage practitioner was indeed incomparable to the Heavenly Yuan Stage.

“Such a strong aura, is this the strength of a Yuan Dan Stage practitioner...”

Lin Dong's eyes shined with a strange light as he stared at Lin Zhentian who stood at the top of the tree. Due to the strength of his Mental Energy, Lin Dong could clearly sense the level of power within the latter's body.

“I wonder if my current Mental Energy is enough to contend against a Yuan Dan Stage practitioner?” Lin Dong licked his lips. In the blink of an eye, he abruptly dashed into the dense forests. He really wanted to test if his Mental Energy had reached such a level!

Atop the tree, Lin Zhentian looked down upon the entire Steel Wood Manor, feeling his power which had grown tens of times stronger compared to before, a satisfied smile on his aged face.

“Lei Family, my Lin Family has endured for so many years, it is finally time to repay you!” Lin Zhentian clasped his hands behind his back as he turned his gaze in the direction of the distant Qingyang Town and muttered.

“Bang!”

A noise rang out just as Lin Zhentian was about to float down to the ground. His expression suddenly changed, he could sense a strong, formless power spreading towards him from the sky before finally rushing directly towards him.

“Mental Energy? Symbol Master?!”

The formless Mental Energy caused Lin Zhentian’s expression to darken. His figure hastily retreated while his fist exploded forward, a vigorous Yuan Power gushing out. The air before him was forcefully compressed, causing sharp sonic booms to resound continuously.

“Bang!”

Lin Zhentian’s fist heavily slammed into the empty air. Almost immediately, a low muffled explosion was heard. That vigorous Yuan Power seemed to have been obstructed by a formless object as

it started to disperse after that collision.

“Bang bang!”

Lin Zhentian continued to retreat as waves of exceptional vigorous Yuan Power screamed out and successively smashed against the air.

Below, Lin Xiao and the rest had finally regained their senses as their expressions changed drastically. To think that there was still such a formidable enemy in this Steel Wood Manor.

“Be on the alert, search the manor!” Lin Xiao shouted in a stern voice, a dark expression on his face.

Upon hearing Lin Xiao’s command, the guards hastily scattered to find any suspicious characters.

“That should be Mental Energy, I’m afraid the one behind that attack is a Symbol Master.” With an ugly expression on his face, Lin Ken muttered in a low voice as he looked towards Lin Zhentian who was still wildly smashing the empty air before him.

At these words, the corners of Lin Xiao’s and Lin Mang’s eyes involuntarily twitched. Since when did their Lin Family make such an enemy? Could he possibly be sent by the Lei Family?

“Boom boom!”

In mid-air, Lin Zhentian's figure finally landed on the ground after ten or so punches. He gazed at the air before him, a serious expression on his face. Only when he sensed that the mysterious and powerful Mental Energy no longer attacked did he sigh in relief. From their previous exchange, it was very likely that the other party was a First or even Second Seal Symbol Master. If the opponent had attacked with in full force, it would be hard to judge who would end up as the winner.

“Friend, may I know where you come from? If my Lin Family has offended you in any way, feel free to say it, this old man will definitely apologize!” On the ground, Lin Zhentian respectfully cupped his fist with his other hand as he said in a loud and clear voice.

Although that Mental Energy had constantly attacked him before, Lin Zhentian could feel that the attacks were not vicious or with the intent to harm. It seems like this attacker did not have any deep hatred or major grudge towards the Lin Family.

Lin Zhentian's voice echoed in the air, however, it did not manage to draw any response and the powerful Mental Energy that had screamed across the skies had now disappeared, as if it had never existed before.

Seeing that there was no response, Lin Zhentian could only sigh as he furrowed his eyebrows and shook his head.

As Lin Zhentian and the rest worried about this matter, the

youngster who sat on a big tree deep in the forest suddenly opened his eyes. Though his complexion was slightly pale, a wild excitement was almost bursting out from his eyes.

Lin Dong had never expected that the always smooth growth of his Mental Energy had actually reached such a tyrannical level!

Chapter 90: Initial Yuan Dan Stage

“Father, what’s going on?”

Upon seeing that Lin Zhentian had safely landed on the ground, Lin Xiao and the rest hastily rushed over and asked in worried voices.

“I don’t know.” Lin Zhentian furrowed his eyebrows as he shook his head before continuing: “The one who had previously attacked should be a First Seal or even Second Seal Symbol Master.”

After hearing these words, although they had expected it earlier on, Lin Xiao’s and the rest’s expressions still involuntarily changed. Worried, they asked: “Could it be an expert who had been invited by the Lei Family?”

Lin Zhentian was silent for a while before he answered: “Shouldn’t be, though the Mental Energy from before was powerful, it did not press me too hard. Rather, it felt more like it was trying to feel me out. If this expert was invited by the Lei Family, he would not do such a thing.”

“Could an expert be hidden somewhere near the Steel Wood Manor?” Lin Xiao inquired in astonishment.

“Perhaps...” Lin Zhentian nodded his head. He suddenly recalled that Mental Energy probing he had sensed quite a while ago. However, the difference in strength of the Mental Energy from that time was completely incomparable to today’s attack, thus he

did not know if the two were the same person.

“During this period of time, secretly send people to search the nearby areas of the Steel Wood Manor. If they do meet any suspicious characters, do not offend them. If the other party is really only trying to probe us, perhaps we may be able to get him to join up with our Lin Family.” Lin Zhentian instructed.

“Roger.”

Lin Xiao and the rest also nodded their heads. If the other party was truly a Symbol Master, he would be a huge help to the Lin Family if he was successfully recruited.

While Lin Zhentian, Lin Xiao and the rest were chatting, a red shadow swiftly arrived from a deeper part of the Steel Wood Manor. The tip of Lin Dong's foot made contact with the tiger's back as he jumped down and landed in front of Lin Zhentian, joyfully asking: “Grandfather, you've succeeded?”

“Heh heh, yes I have. This time, to be able to advance to the Yuan Dan Stage is largely thanks to you, you little brat.” Upon seeing Lin Dong, Lin Zhentian's smile became much gentler as he smiled and nodded his head.

“From now on, our Lin Family finally has its first Yuan Dan Stage practitioner.” Lin Dong was also rather excited, he likewise clearly understood just how much a Yuan Dan Stage practitioner meant to the Lin Family.

“Oh, I still can’t be considered as a Yuan Dan Stage practitioner. At best I am at the Initial Yuan Dan Stage.” Lin Zhentian chuckled as he spread his hands and said.

“Initial Yuan Dan Stage?” Lin Dong was stunned.

“To be more precise, the Yuan Dan Stage consists of three levels. The first is similar to the one I had just advanced to. It is known as the Initial Yuan Dan Stage. After passing through this Initial Yuan Dan Stage, there is still the Dan Yuan Small Full Circle and Perfect levels.” Lin Zhentian smiled as he explained. In the past, the Yuan Dan Stage seemed rather distant and remote, thus it was normal that Lin Dong did not know about the different tiers of this high class stage.

Lin Dong was somewhat amazed. Obviously, he never expected that the so-called Yuan Dan Stage was actually divided into such delicate tiers.

“Then what about after the Yuan Dan Stage?” Lin Dong curiously asked.

“Have you heard this verse? In the journey of self-cultivation, ‘Steal Yin and Yang’, ‘Seize, Create and Transform’, ‘Turn Nirvana’, ‘Grasp Life and Death’. The various stages in our training is contained within these words.”

Lin Zhentian had a slight smile on his face as he continued to explain: “Stealing Yin and Yang refers to the Yin Yang Energy absorbed during the Earthly Yuan and Heavenly Yuan Stages.

Synergizing Yin and Yang, condensing it into a Dan and the levels after the Yuan Dan Stage refers to the so-called three stages: ‘Seize, Create and Transform’.”

“The three stages of ‘Seize, Create and Transform’?”

“‘Form Creation Stage’, ‘Qi Creation Stage’, ‘Creation and Transformation Stage’ are collectively known as the three stages of ‘Seize, Create and Transform’.” While he talked about these three levels, veneration was evident on Lin Zhentian’s face. Though he had stepped into the Initial Yuan Dan Stage today, he understood that he was still very far from the Creation Stage.

“If one is able to advance to the three stages of ‘Seize, Create and Transform’, one would be able to call oneself a top tier expert in the Great Yan Empire. The current head of my Lin Clan is a Creation Stage practitioner. At that level, one could practically go unchallenged under the heavens.” Lin Zhentian softly sighed as he said.

As he gazed at the look of reverence on Lin Zhentian’s face, Lin Dong licked lips, his heart suddenly trembling. His goal would never be just a mere Yuan Dan Stage.

“As for the Nirvana Stage after the Creation Stage, it is so profound and deep that I am unable to understand it...”

Lin Dong silently nodded his head, making sure to carve every word in that verse deep in his heart.

“Hehe, Father is too modest. Although it is only the Initial Yuan Dan Stage, after all he has already stepped into that stage. Even in Yan City, it is already considered rather good.” To one side, Lin Xiao and the rest chuckled as they remarked.

Lin Zhentian smiled before saying: “How has the situation been recently?”

Upon hearing these words, the happy expressions on Lin Xiao and the rest weakened. After hesitating for a while, they recounted the events of the Lei and Xie Families making a move against the Lin Family’s women and children plus the more recent and strange situation the Lei and Xie Families were in.

“Humph, the Lei Family is indeed treating our Lin Family as a thorn in their side.” After listening to Lin Xiao’s report, Lin Zhentian’s expression also darkened.

Lin Xiao nodded his head. In the past, the Lin Family was enduring silently. Though the Lei Family did not have any good feelings towards them, they at least put on a facade of tolerating the Lin Family. However, ever since the Steel Wood Manor had been obtained by the Lin Family and the Yang Yuan Mining Lode unearthed, the Lei Family viewed the Lin Family completely as their enemy. If there was a chance, the Lei Family would probably wipe out the Lin Family and ruin them.

“Father, what do we do next?” Lin Ken asked in a low voice. Now that Lin Zhentian had successfully reached the Initial Yuan Dan Stage, there was no one who would be his match in the whole of Qingyang Town. Therefore, they no longer needed to worry about

the Lei and Xie Families joining hands.

“Send men to rigorously observe every movement of the Lei and Xie Families. In addition, contact the Raging Blade Dojo. When the time comes to make our move, it would be best if we collaborated.” Lin Zhentian muttered.

“After we work out the cooperation arrangements, we will act together and finish off the Lei Family!” An icy glint flashed across Lin Zhentian’s eyes as he said this words. After bearing so patiently for so many years, it was finally time for their counter-attack!

“Roger!”

Lin Xiao and the rest all nodded their heads in acknowledgement. Even though they had entrenched themselves over this period of time and ignored the suspicions and predictions of the outside world, their hearts had grown to feel somewhat stifled. Additionally, the Lei and Xie Families’ underhanded tactics had already caused anger to simmer in their hearts since long ago.

Seeing that everyone was in high morale, Lin Zhentian also chuckled as a cold light shined in his eyes.

“Lei Bao, since you want to exterminate my Lin Family, I will definitely not let you do so!”

...

Ever since Lin Zhentian successfully advanced to the Initial Yuan Dan Stage, the Steel Wood Manor's defence had slightly relaxed. The Lin Family also no longer holed themselves up and instead sent some scouts to Qingyang Town to find out about the Lei and Xie Families' movements.

As for the discussion, they also quickly made contact with the Raging Blade Dojo. The relationship between the two factions had become rather good due to the Lei and Xie Families treatment. Thus, after hearing that the Lin Family wished to cooperate with them, the Raging Blade Dojo did not immediately reject the proposal but slightly hesitated. After all, no one really wanted to truly war with the Lie and Xie Families. Though the two Families were hateful, they were indeed very strong factions.

However, this hesitation instantly vanished like smoke into thin air when they learnt that Lin Zhentian had successfully achieved the Initial Yuan Dan Stage. The collaboration was no longer obstructed. The Raging Blade Dojo clearly understood how intimidating Lin Zhentian was after advancing to the Initial Yuan Dan Stage at this time.

Yet, just as the two parties finished their discussions on the second day, an invitation from the Lei and Xie Families was sent to the Steel Wood Manor...

After lying in wait for about two months, there was finally movement from the Lei and Xie Families!

TLN: We will be alternating between “three stages: ‘Seize, Create

and 'Transform'" and "Creation Stage" because the current translation of it is really a mouthful, but so far I think they refer to the same thing.

[Other notes that I copied from a kind commentor in the Wu Dong Qian Kun World section, his explanation is really good imo]

"The fourth rank is 元丹/Yuan Dan or Primal/Natural Core. When the Yin energy and Yang energy successfully fuses (think of the Taiji symbol), a Primal Core develops in the dantian (diaphragm of the respiratory system). One of the characteristic of this rank is being able to temporarily float in the air even though fighters of this level are not able to move off the ground.

The Primal Core rank is further broken down into three sub tiers of Initial Primal Core小元丹, Advanced Primal Core 元丹小圆满, Perfect Primal Core元丹大圆满.

[We've initially named this Initial Yuan Dan, Yuan Dan Small Full Circle and Yuan Dan Perfect, which are sort of the direct translations]

[Now they are Initial, Advanced and Perfect]

The fifth rank is 造化 or Creation stage. This rank itself is again broken down into three sub tiers of Form Creation 造形, Qi/Energy Creation造气, and then just Creation造化. Each of these three sub tiers have a initial 小成 or complete mastery distinction大成. That means there is technically 6 levels to move through."

Chapter 91: Connected by Marriage

In the large hall, a bright red invitation card quietly sat on the table. Lin Zhentian and the rest of the core Lin Family members were all seated around as they stared at the red invitation card.

“What is the Lei and Xie Families up to? Why would they send an invitation over now? Are they deliberately provoking us?” Lin Xiao furrowed his eyebrows as he solemnly asked.

Lin Dong took the invitation card from the table and flipped it over to look at it. This was a wedding invitation. On the card, it wrote that the Lei and Xie Family were planning a large wedding two days later. The two people getting married, were naturally Lei Li from Lei Family and Xie Yingying. With regards to this marriage, Lin Dong did not care much for it. However, what piqued his curiosity, was that the Xie and Lei Family still chose to invite their Lin Family?

Right now, both factions were at complete loggerheads. If they ever met each other, a conflict was bound to arise. Therefore, what would they purposely invite them?

“It seems like the Lei and Xie Family are planning to create a huge hoo-haa. Not only did our Lin Family received an invitation, but any major faction within 50 kilometres of Qingyang Town, also received an invitation.” Lin Zhentian casually said.

“This is the first time in several years that they have willingly splurged like this.” Lin Ken softly sighed.

“The Lei and Xie Family are probably trying to announce to the world, that they will become full fledged partners in the future. Once they have allied themselves, several factions will probably succumb to them. At that time, within a 50 kilometre radius of Qingyang Town, the Lei and Xie Family would undoubtedly be crowned as the local overlord. ”

As he sipped his tea, Lin Zhentian chuckled as he said: “What a devious plan.”

“So what should we do? Should we go?” Lin Xiao asked.

Lin Zhentian’s fingers lightly tapped on the table. With a dark expression in his eyes, momentarily, he said: “Go! At this time, there is no reason for us to hide anymore. If the stars align, this may even be a good opportunity for our Lin Family.”

Even though it was slightly risky to venture into Lei Family’s territory, right now, Lin Zhentian had no reasons to fear them anymore. Furthermore, since they had secured the cooperation of the Raging Blade Dojo, they could match up against the Lei and Xie Family.

If they could display Lin Family’s true prowess in front of all these factions, in the future, no one from Qingyang Town would ever dare to challenge their Lin Family again.

Furthermore, in this period of time, even if the Lei and Xie Families chose to remain silent, the Lin Family would seize the

initiative to take action.

Since both factions were already loggerheads trying to destroy each other, it was only a matter of time before either one of them made a move.

“Instruct the rest. I want everyone to attend the marriage two days later. I am curious to find out what that old fart Lei Bao wants!” Lin Zhentian chuckled.

“Yes!”

After hearing these words, Lin Xiao and the rest solemnly nodded their heads, as a fiery glint arose in their eyes. After enduring for so many years, they were finally able to fight back now.

With regards to the marriage, this was definitely the most sensational news in Qingyang Town. As the most established families in Qingyang Town, the Lei and Xie Family had been here for generations, and they had laid down deep roots in the city. Now that both factions have allied themselves, their prowess would definitely skyrocket. In fact, they are probably no factions within a 50 kilometre radius of Qingyang Town, that can challenge their dominance.

Therefore, when they received the invitation, most factions did not dare to slight them. Immediately, Qingyang Town became extremely crowded.

Nonetheless, amidst this bustling atmosphere, some wise folks were able to detect a hidden undercurrent. It seems like the Lei and Xie Family wedding would not be a peaceful affair...

“Dong Dong!”

The clear and crisp joyous drum sound continuously echoed around Qingyang Town. In the courtyard of the Lei Family, several factions continuously entered as they exchanged pleasantries. Laughter and congratulations were constantly heard.

As the most well-established faction in Qingyang Town, the wedding organized by them was indeed very impressive.

“Lin Family has arrived!”

Amidst the congratulations, suddenly a servant's voice sounded out. Immediately, the area outside the large door, turned silent. Then, as the crowd slowly turned back to look, they saw that in a distance away, sounds of horses galloping could be heard. Soon after, they saw hundreds of fine horses heading towards them. Finally, as the man in front waved his hand, they all stopped right outside the Lei Family's gate. The total amount of troops managed to fill up half of the entire road, and they looked extremely formidable.

“It's the Lin Family? They actually came...”

“I heard that the Lei Xie Family and the Lin Family are at

complete loggerheads. I never expected the Lin Family to come. Hehe, now it seems like there will be a good show to watch.”

“Haix, this Lin Family is practically committing suicide.”

As several pair of eyes turned to glance at the Lin Family’s troops, many of them were secretly talking to themselves. Right now, even the factions who were once close to the Lin Family, did not dare to go forward and greet them. After the Lei and Xie Families have allied themselves, their powers have grown. Therefore, it would be disastrous to oppose them.

When he saw those fickle-minded cowards, Lin Zhentian did not seem to mind. As he jumped off his horse, his expression remained calm.

“Haha, the patriarch of the Lin Family is indeed fit and strong. To be willing to spare the time to attend our Lei and Xie Families marriage, Lei Pi is truly grateful.” When he saw the Lin Family troop arrive, in front of the Lei Family’s door, a figure quickly walked out accompanied by a large swarm of people. When he saw the large amount of troops brought by the Lin Family, his facial expression remained the same, as he smiled and greeted them.

“I know that in your heart, you secretly wish that I was dead.” Lin Zhentian did not give face to this bastard that once tried to assassinate Lin Dong, as he casually replied.

Lei Pi’s eyelids twitched. Promptly, he turned to look at the large amount of troops and said: “Master Lin, there is no much room in

our manor. Please ask these men to stay outside.”

“Why? Are you afraid that we will stir trouble?” Standing aside, Lin Dong smiled as he said. Then, with a sincere expression on his face, he asked: “How are your injuries?”

After he heard Lin Dong’s words, Lei Pi’s facial expression turned dark involuntarily. With a cold glint in his eyes, he stared at Lin Dong. Right now, he almost looked like a savage wild beast thirsting to devour him.

Lin Zhentian took a step forward, and stood in front of Lin Dong. Even though the old man’s body seemed frail, it was enough to cause Lei Pi to lose his breath, as he involuntarily retreated two steps.

After he pushed Lei Pi back, Lin Zhentian turned to glance at him, before he waved his hands. Immediately, the hundreds of people behind him dissipated.

For this trip, Lin Zhentian had brought nearly all the elite troops in their Lin Family. Even though he had advanced to Initial Yuan Dan Stage, it was always best to be cautious. Though these troops could not enter the Lei Family, they could station themselves outside the Lei Family. Therefore, should something arise, they could rush immediately into the Lei Family’s manor in a blink of an eye.

“Please!”

When he saw the troops dissipated, Lei Pi then opened the door as he said.

After witnessing this situation, Lin Zhentian turned to look at Lin Xiao and the rest, before he nodded his head. Then, under the watchful glances of the crowd, he stepped into the Lei Family's manor. Standing behind him, Lin Dong and Lin Xiao quickly followed.

As he stared at Lin Zhentian and the rest's backs, Lei Pi licked his lips. A vicious and hideous glint surfaced in his eyes, as he muttered softly to himself: "After today, your whole Lin Family will kneel before our Lei Family!"

Chapter 92: The Lei and Xie Families' Plan

In the Lei Family's courtyard was an extremely large and spacious hall. Right now, this hall was exceptionally busy as people continuously streamed in, creating a joyous and vibrant atmosphere.

Lin Zhentian and the rest walked into the large hall. Under the astonished gazes of the crowd, they found a spot and settled down.

In the hall, several gazes were now directed to the Lin Family. However, none of them took the initiative to come forward and greet them. Right now, the Lei and Xie Families were on the rise, and since the Lin Family was at loggerheads with them, if they came forward to greet them, they would indirectly offend the Lei and Xie Families, and all of them knew that this would be a terrible bargain.

Due to this fact, the area near the Lin Family suddenly became emptier as several people purposefully avoided them.

Lin Zhentian was rather indifferent towards this situation and did not find it too surprising.

As time flew by, the large hall became increasingly crowded. All the major factions within a hundred mile radius of Qingyang Town continuously streamed in and seated themselves at various positions.

Many of these factions were quite powerful as well. Even though

they were weaker than the Lin Family, if they were to ally among themselves, they would definitely become a force to be reckoned with.

After most of the factions had arrived, a commotion suddenly erupted near of the hall's entrance. Soon after, another crowd of people directly walked inside.

“The Raging Blade Dojo has arrived.”

After they saw this large crowd of people entered, the crowd began to murmur among themselves.

When he heard this commotion, Lin Dong also turned to look. Immediately, he saw Luo Cheng's familiar figure and standing behind him, was Wu Yun, whom he had not seen in a long time.

After the Raging Blade Dojo entered the large hall, their gazes quickly settled on the Lin Family. A scary smile surfaced on that scar-ridden face as Luo Cheng brought his group before stopping in front of the Lin Family, to the bewilderment of the crowd.

“Old Master Lin, it seems like your body is still robust.” Luo Cheng clasped his hands as he greeted Lin Zhentian. Then, his eyes immediately scanned the latter. Promptly, his heart began to tremble slightly. He could faintly sense an oppressive aura from the latter's body. This was a novel sensation that he had never sensed before. It seems like the Lin Family had spoken the truth. The current Lin Zhentian had indeed successfully advanced to Initial Yuan Dan Stage.

“Haha, Master Luo looks well too.” Lin Zhentian smiled as he replied.

While Luo Cheng and Lin Zhentian were conversing, Wu Yun also approached Lin Dong. After he carefully sized up the latter, he finally muttered in a soft voice: “Hey, I heard from my Master that you seemed to have dealt with Lei Xing...” Towards the end, Wu Yun made a movement as if to slit his throat with his hand.

Lin Dong gently smiled and casually nodded his head.

“Damn, you are fierce!” After he saw Lin Dong nod his head, Wu Yun involuntarily rolled his eyes. The current him had undergone a period of intense training before he had managed to advance to Earthly Yuan Middle Stage. At first, he had thought that his progress was rather fast, however he never expected that the current Lin Dong could already kill a Heavenly Yuan Stage expert.

After he saw that depressed expression, Lin Dong smiled as he changed the topic.

After Lin Zhentian and Luo Cheng conversed for a while, they dragged Lin Dong, who was talking happily to Wu Yun, away and seated him down.

After Luo Cheng and the rest took their seats, the din in the large hall reduced. Soon after, a commotion erupted outside the large hall. Then, Lei Bao, who was dressed in black silk robes, walked into the giant hall with a smile as his face, followed by a huge

entourage of Lei and Xie Family men.

Evidently, Lei Bao had a high standing in Qingyang Town. Once they saw him appear, several factions immediately stood up and began to congratulate him.

Lei Bao was obviously very pleased with this. as the wrinkles on his face bloomed like chrysanthemums.

Behind Lei Bao, Xie Qian and the other core family members also smiled in return.

Once Lei Bao appeared, Lin Dong immediately concentrated on the former. Soon after, he involuntarily furrowed his eyebrows. Though he did not know why, he could feel that the current Lei Bao was different from before.

Just as Lin Dong furrowed his eyebrows, Lei Bao, Xie Qian and the rest walked past the Lin Family. At that moment, the entire hall turned silent as everyone turned to look.

Lin Zhentian was seated calmly as he kept his eyes on the table, as if he did not see Lei Bao and the rest. Meanwhile, he gave no indication that he was going to congratulate them.

Since Lin Zhentian was acting in this manner, Lin Xiao and the rest were naturally seated as well. It was as if they had all turned blind.

After witnessing this scene, the smile on Lei Bao's face dimmed. Immediately, an icy glint surfaced in the rest of the Lei and Xie Families members and the surrounding atmosphere began to turn slightly strange.

However, this strange atmosphere did not last for long. After Lei Bao casually turned to look at Lin Zhentian and the rest, he immediately led the rest of his people away as he unexpectedly chose not to clash with them directly.

When they saw that both parties chose to ignore each other, many people secretly sighed in their hearts. However, they were perplexed that the Lin Family actually dared to slight the Lei and Xie Families. After all, compared to these two families, the Lin Family still had some catching up to do.

Lei Bao sat on the most central seat in the hall before he jovially said: "Today is an auspicious day for our Lei and Xie Family. I, Lei Bao would like to thank all of you for kindly gracing us with your presence. Today is a festive occasion for the young people. Without further ado, let the wedding begin."

Lin Dong yawned. He was hardly interested in the wedding. However, he was curious to find out why the Lei and Xie Family had staged such a large event. If they were only planning to announce their alliance through marriage, it was not worthwhile to do it this way.

The rest of the day was rather boring. The lead characters of the day, Lei Li and Xie Yingying, first respectfully greeted their elders, before they were taken by their respective elders to greet the rest

of the guests.

Even though the Lei and Xie Families were highly prominent, most of the people present were highly reputable members in Qingyang Town. Hence, most of them were hardly interested in a wedding of two younger generation members. Yet many of them remained vigilant as they observed. After all, they knew that the Lei and Xie Families did not host such a huge event merely for this wedding.

Under this lively, yet peculiar atmosphere, Lei Li and Xie Yingying left the scene. Soon after, everyone in the crowd began to turn to look at Lei Bao, who had a smile plastered across his entire face.

As if he knew that he once again became the focal point, Lei Bao faintly smiled as he finished the glass of wine in his hand. Then, he stood up and loudly proclaimed: “Today, I have invited all of you here, first, to celebrate the marriage union between our Lei and Xie Families. Next, is to propose a deal.”

“The main attraction has started.” Lin Dong, who was almost bored to death, instantly woke up when he heard these words.

“Haha, I wonder what plans Old Master Lei has?” In the large hall, several people chuckled as they asked.

“There are several major factions within a hundred mile radius of our Qingyang Town. I don’t mean to offend, but most of them are quite insignificant. If one wishes to become a significant faction,

one must expand to Yan City. I am sure everyone here must know how lucrative Yan City is. Comparatively speaking, our Qingyang Town is practically a dumpster.”

“However, even though the potential profits in Yan City are enormous, if we wish to grab a share, none of us would be able to do it alone. Therefore, after some discussion, our Lei and Xie Families have set up a small business union. This time, we have invited everyone here, because we want to welcome you to join our business union and share the profits!” Lei Bao laughed as he said.

As Lei Bao’s laughter echoed across the hall, the scene gradually turned quiet. Several eyebrows were slowly furrowed. They had never expected that the Lei and Xie Families would form a business union, and now they are actually trying to rope everyone else in too.

In a way, wouldn’t they all become subordinates of the Lei and Xie Families? This... was simply too absurd, right?

“That old fellow, must have lost his mind...”

Lin Dong shook his head as he muttered in his heart. Even though the Lei and Xie Families had some standing in Qingyang Town, they had not reached the level where thousands would respond to their call. Disregarding the fact that this business union may not actually be profitable, which faction here would willingly submit to the Lei and Xie Families?

Therefore, this proposition sounded a little comical. The Lei and

Xie Families were still not in such a commanding position...

Indeed, as Lin Dong expected, after Lei Bao finished his words, a figure stood up and said.

“Old Master Lei is wise and ambitious, hugely surpassing myself. However, I merely wish to tend to my little bit of property. The profits from Yan City are potentially enormous, but I am afraid I don’t have the ability to fight for it. Therefore, please count us out for this business union. Farewell.” After finishing, a group of people stood up and prepared to leave.

“The reason why many of you are unwilling to partake is because you feel that my Lei Family does not have the capability to lead all of you.”

Gazing at the leaving group, Lei Bao casually smiled. Then, he slowly stood up. As he stood up, an extremely powerful wave of Yuan Power violently gushed out from his body and instantly filled the entire hall. That overwhelming power immediately caused the complexions of several people to flush red.

“Yuan Dan Stage!”

After they felt that immense and oppressive aura, several shocked screams echoed in the large hall. The group of people who were planning leave turned rigid on the spot.

Lei Bao at the Heavenly Yuan Late Stage was not enough for them

to respect and fear. However, if he was at Yuan Dan Stage, it was a completely different story!

Within a hundred mile radius of Qingyang Town, Lei Bao was probably the only person who could reach Yuan Dan Stage!

“Since this old man dares to speak, I must have some confidence in my abilities. How about it? Do you all believe that my Lei Family has the ability now?” As he stared at the surprised expressions in the crowd, Lei Bao indifferently smiled as he said.

This time, none of them dared to rebuke him. An uneasy expression surfaced on their faces. Lei Bao’s actions were clearly intended to demonstrate the prowess of his Lei Family. As such, right now if one choses to cooperate, they could still remain friendly with the Lei Family. However, if they chose not to cooperate, they would definitely become the Lei Family’s enemies.

A Yuan Dan practitioner is enough to cause most people in the crowd to tremble in fear.

“If anyone is unwilling, I will not force you to stay. Feel free to leave.”

After they heard Lei Bao’s words, many people were secretly cursing in their hearts. However, none of them dared to leave. Therefore, the atmosphere in the hall slowly became stiff and awkward.

As he witnessed this scene, prideful delight surfaced in Lei Bao's eyes. Yuan Dan Stage is truly extraordinary.

“Since the Lei Family has such grand plans, our Lin Family does not wish to impose anymore. Farewell.”

However, his smile did not last long as it slowly froze after he heard a casual mutter. Immediately, with a vicious glint in his eyes, he slowly concentrated on the Lin Family members who were now slowly getting up.

Chapter 93: Grand Master Gu

As they stared at the Lin Family members, who were now all getting up, several people were shocked. Evidently, they did not expect that the Lin Family would still dare to slight the Lei Family after knowing that Lei Bao had advanced to Yuan Dan Stage.

Even though many factions present did not want to partake in this so-called “business union”, owing to Lei Bao’s strength, none of them wanted to be the first to stand up. After all, the first one to stand up would surely invoke the wrath of Lei Bao and the entire Lei Family.

Over at the Raging Blade Dojo area, Luo Cheng’s facial expression also changed after he saw Lei Bao’s true abilities. However, after Lin Zhentian made his move, Luo Cheng hesitated for a moment before he gritted his teeth and stood up as well. With his hands cupped together, he said: “Our Raging Blade Dojo does not wish to partake too.”

Even though the current situation was out of Luo Cheng’s expectations, he did not want the Raging Blade Dojo, which he had painstakingly built over the years, to become a pawn of the Lei and Xie Families. This so-called “business union” was merely a euphemism. In the end, the majority of the spoils would probably go to the Lei and Xie Families while the rest of them would have to settle for scraps.

The actions by the Raging Blade Dojo immediately caused a commotion in the giant hall. From a certain angle, the Raging Blade Dojo could be considered as the most powerful faction

besides the Lei and Xie Families. Therefore, their current choice would clearly impede the Lei and Xie Families' plans.

In the large hall, many hearts began to beat wildly. Now that two major factions had stood up, the courage in their hearts began to grow.

At the center of the large hall, Lei Bao's face was calm like still water. No one could tell whether he was delighted or enraged. His slightly sunken eyes were staring at Lin Zhentian like a pair of daggers. Moments later, an eerie smile formed on his lips. After all, he had expected this situation and he was not at a complete loss. Furthermore, right now, this was the situation that he needed.

If he wanted to command all these other factions, then he must first make an example of those who dared oppose him! Therefore, the prime target was naturally the Lin Family.

"Since the Lin Family does not wish to partner with us, I will not force you to." Inside the silent large hall, Lei Bao's coarse voice slowly echoed. Immediately, his face turned icy cold.

"However, your Lin Family murdered my Lei Family's Lei Xing. Today, I want you to give me an explanation!"

When Lei Bao's final word rang out, an extremely powerful force violently gushed out from his body. Like a whirlwind, it blew across the hall and caused everyone nearby to feel rather breathless.

“They finally made their move!”

When they saw Lei Bao’s actions, this thought flashed across in everyone’s minds. They had already expected that there was going to be a clash in today’s wedding.

“The Lin Family is out of luck.”

As they felt that powerful aura emerge from Lei Bao’s body, some factions who were once close with the Lin Family secretly sighed in their hearts. They also understood that right now, Lei Bao was trying to establish his dominance. As such, the Lin Family, whom they were at loggerheads, became their prime target.

Lin Zhentian’s facial expression remained calm. As he lifted his head, he stared back at Lei Bao before he icily smiled and said: “Lei Bao, after all these years, you are still as shameless. That day, Lei Pi and Lei Xing from your Lei Family tried to assassinate Lin Dong. In the end, Lin Dong killed one of them instead. This is your just deserts! In fact, this old man should be the one demanding an explanation from your Lei Family!”

Lin Zhentian’s words shocked the crowds once again. Several astonished gazes were immediately directed towards Lin Dong, who was standing silently in a corner. They never expected that such a young boy would actually be able to kill Lei Xing. After all, that fellow was a Heavenly Yuan Stage expert.

“Don’t think that you can be so haughty just because you have advanced to Initial Yuan Dan Stage. To think of making an

example of my Lin Family, I am afraid your Lei Family does not have the ability!” Lin Zhentian’s facial expression suddenly turned serious. He violently strode forward as a powerful force, that had been suppressed for a long time, suddenly exploded out. A wooden table nearby instantly burst into pieces due to that powerful force.

“Another Yuan Dan Stage?!”

Just as Lin Zhentian’s aura exploded, the whole hall erupted as bewildered onlookers stared at the former. Only now did they finally understand why the Lin Family was not afraid of the Lei and Xie Families’ alliance. It was because the Lin Family also had a Yuan Dan Stage expert!

“The Lin Family has really hidden themselves well!” Several people turned and muttered to each other. They finally realised that they had underestimated this usually low-profile family.

“That old fellow has advanced to Yuan Dan Stage too?!”

Faced with the powerful aura that burst out from Lin Zhentian, Lei and Xie Families members’ facial expression began to distort. Evidently, they did not foresee such an unexpected development.

“I was wondering why your Lin Family would actually dare to challenge our Lei and Xie Families. It turns out that you have advanced to Initial Yuan Dan Stage.” Lei Bao’s eyes were tightly locked onto Lin Zhentian as a solemn expression surfaced on his face. The strength displayed by Lin Zhentian had really surprised

him. A faction that possess a Yuan Dan Stage is fundamentally different from one that does not.

At this time, even he felt a little troubled. After all, this target was truly a difficult one.

However, he only felt a little troubled. After all, in preparation for today's event, the cautious Lei Bao had made other plans too.

When he thought of the other plans that he had made, Lei Bao's heart calmed down. Promptly, a malicious glint surfaced in his eyes. The more powerful the Lin Family became, the more intense his killing intent became. After all, he knew that at this rate, his Lei Family would be displaced by their Lin Family.

Standing behind Lin Zhentian, Lin Dong's eyes had been focused on Lei Bao from the start. He realized that when Lin Zhentian displayed his Initial Yuan Dan Stage prowess, a flash of surprise had surfaced in the latter's eyes. However, the frantic expression he had anticipated did not appear.

This scene caused Lin Dong's eyebrows to furrow slightly. Soon after, his eyes slowly scanned across the Lei and Xie Families' area only to suddenly stop moments later.

The location that Lin Dong's eyes stopped at was not a prominent location. Seated there, was a man clothed in yellow robes. That man looked ordinary and no one intentionally went to chat with him. Therefore, when most people turned to look at him, they would automatically overlook him. However, Lin Dong felt a

familiar undulation from this ordinary looking person.

Mental Energy!

“This fellow does not belong to the Lei and Xie Families!” When he saw this scene, Lin Dong’s eyes flashed. It seems like the Lei and Xie Families have really prepared painstakingly for today’s event.

“Lin Zhentian, if you surrender Lei Xing’s murderer, Lin Dong. Our Lei Family will drop this issue!” Lei Bao’s deep voice sounded out again.

“Heh, if you surrender Lei Pi. Our Lin Family will also drop this matter!” Lin Zhentian coldly chuckled.

Upon hearing the duo’s vicious exchange, everyone knew that a peaceful negotiation would be impossible...

“Huff...”

Luo Cheng exhaled a deep breath, then with a wave of his hand, he brought his Raging Blade Dojo’s troops and stood beside the Lin Family. They were clearly demonstrating their stand.

“Very well.”

After witnessing this scene, the eerie smile on Lei Bao’s face intensified. He stared at Luo Cheng and asked: “Master Luo, do you

think that since Lin Zhentian has advanced to Initial Yuan Dan Stage, he could stand up against my Lei Family?”

“Everyone knows what your plans are. Even you know that if I stand with your Lei Family, in the future my Raging Blade Dojo will surely be ruined.” Luo Cheng replied in an indifferent manner.

“If that’s the case, don’t regret your decision Master Luo.”

As his words echoed in the air, Lei Bao’s face turned even darker. Soon after, amidst the bewildered gazes of the crowd, he turned towards a corner, respectfully cupping his hands together and saying: “Grand Master Gu. There has been some unforeseen development. Perhaps, we may require assistance from you.”

When they heard Lei Bao’s words, everyone was stunned. Even Lin Zhentian’s facial expression changed. Promptly, they all turned to look at the same location, only to see a middle-aged man, clothed in yellow robes, calmly seated.

“Sigh... Lei Bao. It seems like your Lei Family’s prestige in Qingyang Town is not as high as you claimed. However, since I have given you my word, I will naturally help you remove these thorns.”

Under the gazes of the crowd, the man clothed in yellow robes, slowly lifted his head. His eyes suddenly became exceptionally bright as everyone who looked at him immediately suffered a violent headache.

“Symbol Master!”

Lin Zhentian took in a deep breath, as his facial expression turned extremely ugly. He never expected that the Lei Family had actually managed to obtain the assistance of a Symbol Master!

Chapter 94: Revealed

“Symbol Master?!”

The expressions on Lin Xiao and the rest turned extremely tense at the same time. This Lei Bao was indeed an old cunning fox to have made such thorough preparations. It seems like this “Grandmaster Gu” was a helper from Yan City.

“Father, could this man be the person that has been spying on our Lin Family lately?” Lin Xiao approached Lin Zhentian as he softly asked.

When Lin Zhentian advanced to Initial Yuan Dan Stage, he was probed by a mysterious Symbol Master. Now that they saw this Symbol Master that was hired by the Lei Family, Lin Xiao naturally linked the two together.

“I am not sure.”

Lin Zhentian shook his head. His current facial expression was not as calm as before. This move by Lei Bao had vastly exceeded his expectations. Even though he did not know which tier this grandmaster Gu belonged to, the fact that Lei Bao treated him with such respect, indicated that he should be at least a 2nd Seal Symbol Master. A Symbol Master of that level was not so easy to handle, even if it were himself. Furthermore, there was also another Initial Yuan Dan Stage Lei Bao to worry about!

The situation that seemed promising had instantaneously

reversed itself!

This sudden development caused the rest of the factions in the large hall to silently swallow their breaths. The fact that the Lei Family could hire such a powerful man to assist them showed that they were indeed the most well established faction in Qingyang Town.

“Haha, I never expected that I would actually encounter two Initial Yuan Dan Stage experts in such a backwater place like Qingyang Town. It seems like this place has a rather good Feng Shui.” The middle aged man, dressed in yellow robes, smiled as he stared at Lin Zhentian.

“May I inquire your name? Today’s issue concerns only the Lin and Lei Families. If you would stand aside, I will double what the Lei Family is paying you!” Lin Zhentian solemnly said.

“My name is Gu Ying. I am the deputy head of Yan City’s Blood Cloth Sect and a 2nd Seal Symbol Master.”

That middle aged man looked at Lin Zhentian with a peculiar expression on his face and said: “The compensation that the Lei Family has promised me is 60% of the profits from the Yang Yuan Stone Mining Lode within the Steel Wood Manor. If your Lin Family wishes to give the Steel Wood Manor to me, I will gladly stand aside.”

Upon hearing these words, Lin Zhentian and the rest’s expressions turned even uglier. The Blood Cloth Sect was a pretty

formidable faction in Yan City. They never expected that they would actually interfere in the matters of Qingyang Town. Isn't the Lei Family worried that they would invite trouble...

“With regards to your request, I am afraid our Lin Family cannot agree.” Lin Zhentian secretly signalled to the rest, warning them to remain cautious.

After hearing these words, that Gu Ying simply spread out his hands. His smiling expression caused them to feel a chill in their hearts. A man with a vicious look was not scary, what was truly scary, was a smiling tiger like him.

“Clang!”

To one side, Lei Bao also released a weird laugh. With a wave of his hand, all four doors of the giant hall was jolted open immediately. The troops from the Lei and Xie Families quickly flooded into this area. The murderous glint on their blades instantly dissipated the joyous atmosphere from before.

When they saw the Lei and Xie Families' formation, the rest of the factions were also stunned. Immediately, they all began to retreat and discreetly band together to prevent the Lei and Xie Families from attacking them.

“Swish!”

Just as the Lei and Xie Families made their move, a sharp whistle

was quickly blown by Lin Xiao. Immediately, a rumbling signal echoed out from outside the manor.

Soon after the signal was released war cries began to echo out outside the Lei Family estate. Evidently, the Lin Family and Raging Blade Dojo troops were rushing in.

Right now, both side were at war!

“Today, our Lei and Xie Families will only target the Lin Family and the Raging Blade Dojo. We hope the rest of you will not interfere, if not I, Lei Bao, will personally visit you in future!”

When he heard the sounds of battle outside, Lei Bao’s face turned increasingly cold. He strode forward, his stern gaze sweeping across the rest of the factions as he coldly shouted.

When they heard his shout, most of the other factions immediately nodded their heads. After all, be it the Lei and Xie Families, or the Lin Family and the Raging Blade Dojo, they could not match up. Therefore, they definitely did not want to be involved in this conflict.

“Lin Zhentian, we have struggled against each other for years. Today, it’s finally time to settle everything once and for all! A man like you, who was chased out by his own Lin Clan, does not have the qualifications to climb above my Lei Family!” When he saw that the rest of the factions had obliged, Lei Bao coldly chuckled as he turned to face Lin Zhentian and declared.

“Whether we have the qualifications is not for you to decide. Besides, if you want to wreck my Lin Family, your Lei Family should be prepared to pay the price in blood!” In that instance, Lin Zhentian’s face turned extremely dark. All these years, for the sake of his family’s survival, he had suffered the Lei and Xie Family. Today, it was time for him to relieve himself!

“Hehe, very good. I shall see if a useless dog like you, who was banished to my Qingyang Town, has the capability to speak so haughtily!”

Lei Bao released an angry laughter as a thick Yuan Power gushed out from his body and quickly undulated around both of his arms. Faintly, one could discern an extremely

potent white energy streaming out from his pores.

This white energy seemed weak. However, anyone with a sharp eye could tell that this matter had the power to break down metal and stone!

“Pure Yuangang Energy!”

When Lin Dong saw this scene, his eyelids involuntarily twitched. Once a person had advanced to Yuan Dan Stage, the Yuan Power in his Dan Tian would be compressed into a more potent and lethal energy. This energy was far more powerful and lethal than ordinary Yuan Power and it was termed as Pure Yuangang Energy. In fact, it’s offensive and defensive abilities far exceeded that of Yuan Power.

In fact, it could be said the Pure Yuangang Energy was a Yuan Dan Stage expert's most powerful weapon!

When Lei Bao made his move, he immediately utilized Pure Yuangang Energy. Evidently, he would go at it seriously from the start. After all, he knew that the reason why the Lin Family dared to oppose them was because of Lin Zhentian's existence. Once he got rid of Lin Zhentian, the rest of the Lin Family would be like a bunch of ants, waiting to be squashed by him!

“Grandmaster Gu, please take care of the rest of the Lin Family and Raging Blade Dojo members!”

Pure Yuangang Energy bubbled forth as Lei Bao released a deep roar. Promptly, he stomped on the floor and his body immediately dashed towards Lin Zhentian. Along the way, due to his extreme speed, the surroundings tables and chairs were blown to pieces, making his attack seem all the more terrifying.

Even though the appearance of a 2nd Seal Symbol Master disadvantaged the Lin Family and the Raging Blade Dojo, now that matters had escalated to such a stage, there was no room for retreat. Thus, the only way to survive was a fight to the death. After all, based on Lei Bao's character, even if they surrendered, the Lin Family and the Raging Blade Dojo would be utterly wiped out.

“You guys be careful!”

Therefore, faced with Lei Bao, who was menacingly charging towards him, Lin Zhentian did not shrink back and instead softly shouted at Lin Xiao and the rest. An extremely potent Pure Yuangang Energy undaunted on both of his fists. In an instant, he violently burst forward and viciously collided against Lei Bao.

“Bang Bang Bang!”

In the moment when both fist and palm exploded together, an extremely powerful shock wave was generated at the epicenter. Like a hurricane, the force caused everyone’s faces to recoil in pain and even the air rumbled as the shock wave passed through!

A battle between Yuan Dan Stage practitioners was far more spectacular than that of the Heavenly Yuan Stage!

As they stared at the two figures clashing against each other, several people secretly muttered among themselves. Based on the strength of that shockwave, even if a Heavenly Yuan Late Stage expert joined in the duel, he would likely face his demise. The Yuan Dan Stage indeed deserved its reputation.

“Attack!”

While Lei Bao personally dealt with Lin Zhentian, a sinister smile appeared on Xie Qian’s face. He released a soft roar, immediately taking charge of the rest of the elites in the two families and dashing towards Lin Xiao and the rest.

“Everyone, be careful!”

When they saw Xie Qian and his men approach, Luo Cheng and Lin Xiao simultaneously let out a fierce roar. Immediately, both of them strode forward almost at the same time as a powerful Yuan Power exploded forth and blew against Xie Qian and the rest.

“Two Heavenly Yuan Late Stage practitioners?!”

Xie Qian and the rest stared in shock at Lin Xiao. They had never expected that over this period of time, the latter had managed to improve and advance to Heavenly Yuan Late Stage!

“Haha, its only Heavenly Yuan Late Stage, what’s there to be surprised about?” Just as Xie Qian and the rest were stunned, a shadow clothed in yellow robes gently floated in front of Lin Xiao and Luo Cheng. His casual tone delighted Xie Qian and the rest.

“Leave these two guys to me. You guys quickly dispose of the rest.” Gu Ying smiled at Lin Xiao and Luo Cheng before turning his head to instructed Xie Qian and the rest.

“Haha, then we shall leave it to you grandmaster Gu!” Xie Qian smiled in return, releasing an eerie laughter at Lin Xiao before leading the rest of the team around the two.

“Humph!”

Upon seeing that Xie Qian and the rest intended to go avoid

them, Lin Xiao and Luo Cheng snorted. They exchanged a glance and in a flash, the both of them dashed towards Xie Qian.

“Zing!”

However, just as the two of them prepared to make their move, suddenly, from their corner of their eyes, they could sense a powerful force directed towards them. That crafty angle caused the two of them to retreat several steps before they were able to avoid the attack.

Gu Ying had his arms crossed at this chest. Two blades were circling around his body like a pair of snakes while his feet were actually half an inch off the ground. A powerful and formless energy wrapped around his body, causing Lin Xiao and Luo Cheng to feel an immense pressure.

“I’m afraid country bumpkins like you have never seen the power of a Symbol Master. Guess today will be an eye-opener for you two.” Gu Ying looked at the duo, ridicule in his eyes. He thrust forward his finger and the two blades encircling his body immediately transformed into two white flashes as they viciously flew towards Lin Xiao and Luo Cheng.

“Watch out!”

The speed of the blades were astonishingly quick. Even Lin Xiao and Luo Cheng could only see a flash before they immediately sensed a icy cold aura directed towards them. Instantly, the two of them hurriedly retreated.

“Dong!”

When he saw the two of them evade the attack, Gu Ying laughed in an indifferent manner before his Mental Energy undulated and spread out, viciously slamming into Lin Xiao’s and Luo Cheng’s bodies. Soon after, the two of them became slightly absent minded and their movements became sluggish.

“Buzz!”

In the instant when the duo were dazed, the sharp blades once again flew towards them. And when the two of them recovered their senses, the tip of the blades were already mere centimeters away from their throats, ready to pierce through!

“A boring fight.” Gu Ying smiled at their bewildered expressions, his fingertip shook as both blades prepared to thrust through their throats.

“Ding!”

Just as the blades were about to penetrate Lin Xiao and Luo Cheng’s throats, suddenly two black shadow violently flew out and precisely collided with the tip of the blades, causing the two blades to be forcefully blow away.

“Eh?”

This sudden development caused Gu Ying, Lin Xiao and Luo Cheng to be shocked. As they turned to look, they saw two black shadows spinning in mid-air before flying somewhere behind them.

The three of them followed the flight trajectory of the black shadows, only to see a young man peacefully standing behind. Right now, several black shadows were slowly rotating around him.

“Dong-er?!”

When he realized the person’s identity, Lin Xiao immediately shouted out as shock filled his face.

When he saw Lin Xiao’s expression, Lin Dong felt a little resigned. After all he did not want to reveal himself. However, now that the Lei Family had managed to obtain the assistance of a Symbol Master, he was forced to show his hand...

Lin Dong eyes were tightly peeled on Gu Ying, who was still slightly shocked, as a cold light flashed in his eyes. The latter’s methods were indeed vicious and he clearly intended to kill Lin Xiao and Luo Cheng.

The young man lifted his hand, and pointed at Gu Ying before he softly said: “Father, leave him to me...”

Chapter 95: Showdown between Symbol Masters

Upon hearing Lin Dong's words, Lin Xiao was shocked. Just as he was about to say something about it, he saw the serious face before him and the words stopped at his lips. The current Lin Dong gave him an entirely different feeling from before. Faintly, Lin Xiao could sense a sort of pressure emanating from his son's body.

That kind of pressure was exactly the same as the one from Gu Ying!

"I really never expected that I would encounter such a young Symbol Master in this tiny Qingyang Town."

While Lin Xiao was shocked, Gu Ying's gaze also concentrated on Lin Dong's body. Moments later, a trace of surprise bubbled up on the originally ridiculing expression as Gu Ying slowly said.

"Symbol Master?"

At these words Lin Xiao's and Luo Cheng's hearts skipped a beat as they stared in disbelief at Lin Dong. Although they were familiar with Lin Dong's progress in his Yuan Power cultivation, they had never known or found out that Lin Dong was actually also a Symbol Master!

"Symbol Master...Could it be that the mysterious Symbol Master who had probed Father's strength in the Steel Wood Manor was

not someone else but actually Dong-er?” Lin Xiao was evidently one of the more quick-witted in the older generation. In an instant, he recalled the mysterious Symbol Master who made his move in the Steel Wood Manor that day. Immediately, he let out a sigh of relief, yet at the same time, he did not know whether to laugh or to cry after attributing it to Lin Dong’s mischievous character as a youngster.

“If that mysterious Symbol Master from that day was really Dong-er, then his current strength is probably enough to contend against a Initial Yuan Dan Stage expert...”

Lin Xiao clearly remembered Lin Zhentian’s assessment of the mysterious Symbol Master that day. At once, pride and gratification soared in his heart, again feeling somewhat astonished. No one could have predicted that Lin Dong not only had an overwhelming talent in Yuan Power, but also possessed a literally terrifying gift in the illusionary-like Mental Energy. The fact that the Lin Family was bestowed with such a descendent was truly a blessing from the heavens.

To one side, Luo Cheng’s gaze also concentrated on Lin Dong for a short period as he deeply sighed in his heart. At this time, even considering his temperament, an unbounded admiration rose in his heart. Having such a descendent in the Lin Family meant that they would definitely not be contained to this tiny Qingyang Town in the future.

Faced with Lin Xiao’s and the rest’s shocked gazes, Lin Dong currently did not have anytime to explain. His eyes were peeled onto Gu Ying. This was the first time he had encountered a true

battle between Symbol Masters and the opponent before him was no ordinary Symbol Master but a 2nd Seal Symbol Master!

This was a rather much stronger level compared to Lin Dong's. However, from the previous exchange, the other party should have advanced to the 2nd Seal only recently. Else even Lin Dong would find it extremely troublesome to cope with this opponent.

“Father, go help the others.” Lin Dong softly said.

“Okay, you be extra careful.”

At this time, Lin Xiao also understood that he would be of little help even if he stayed. Since Lin Dong was also a Symbol Master, even if he were unable to defeat Gu Ying, it would still be possible to restrict Gu Ying for a while. And during this time, if the two Heavenly Yuan Late Stage experts were free to deal with the Lei and Xie Families, it would be no small blow to the latter.

As these words were said, Lin Xiao and Luo Cheng exchanged a quick look before very cautiously retreating. Gu Ying shot a glance towards the duo, the two ominous swords by his side slowly rotating in mid-air. His finger twitched, yet he in the end he stopped his hand and concentrated all his attention on the youngster before him.

Though Lin Dong looked to be a youngster, Gu Ying was able to sense a rather strong Mental Energy undulation from the former's body.

“You should currently still be a First Seal Symbol Master right? To be able to reach this step at such an age is really no mean feat.” Gu Ying’s finger lightly wiped across the blade before him as he smiled in an indifferent manner.

“In the future, you will probably grow strong. However, the current you is not my match...furthermore, I myself do not like to leave any loose ends. Today, assisting the Lei Family to wipe out your Lin Family has already resulted in a huge grudge. Thus, don’t blame me for being ruthless.” Towards the end, the smile on Gu Ying’s face grew increasingly wide and all the more frightening.

In response, Lin Dong was silent and did not reply to the other party’s words. The Destiny Symbol in his Niwan Palace was currently throbbing like a live heart.

“Bang~bang~”

Accompanying this rhythmic throbbing, powerful Mental Energy also slowly spread out from Lin Dong’s mind. In an instant, it embraced the entire hall as the tips of his feet slowly floated up half an inch into the air.

The abrupt pressure from this Mental Energy undoubtedly caused a moment of silence in the chaotic hall. Immediately, gazes were cast towards that youngster’s back and when they saw that the youngster was floating half an inch above the ground like Gu Ying, they could not help but violently gasp in a breath of cold air.

“Symbol Master...”

*That brat from the Lin Family is actually a Symbol Master!”

Many of the factions looked at each other in dismay. Just how much power did this Lin Family conceal? A Initial Yuan Dan Stage practitioner and a Symbol Master. This kind of strength would be rather considerable even in Yan City!

It was only now did they realise that it turned out, the victor of this clash had yet to be set in stone. The power that the Lin Family was gradually displaying once again the originally tilted scales to slowly shift once again.

“Bang!”

At the center of the hall, palms and fists filled with an insane amount of power violently clashed. The resulting overflowing force blew outwards in the form of a gale, directly ripping apart the floor as Lin Zhentian and Lei Bao were forced to retreat few steps backwards.

The two figures stabilized themselves before once again charging forward with ominous glints in their eyes. In that instance, they also both felt that Mental Energy pressure that pervaded the air at which they were both shocked as they hastily turned their heads. When they found that the source of the Mental Energy was actually a familiar figure, the expressions on their faces abruptly changed.

“Such a strong Mental Energy, this...is this Dong-er’s?”

Lin Zhentian was somewhat dumbstruck as he stared at the youngster's figure. Even he felt some pressure and also a sense of familiarity from that powerful Mental Energy.

Familiarity? At this thought, Lin Zhentian was stunned for a moment. He quickly regained his wits, a strange expression on his face: "This naughty brat, to think that he actually kept hiding it. He must have been the one who was probing me with Mental Energy that day. This is really too much..."

Although he could not decide whether to laugh or cry in his heart, a pleasant surprise thickly colored Lin Zhentian's eyes. The assistance of Gu Ying which the Lei Family had managed to obtain was a huge variable. A 2nd Seal Symbol Master would be extremely hard to deal with even for himself. Fortunately, their Lin Family still had the most secretive Lin Dong...

"Haha, Lei Bao, did you really think that you would be able to destroy my Lin Family after obtaining a helper?" Lin Zhentian's gaze turned to look at the ugly expression on Lei Bao's face and coldly chuckled.

"Heh, you sly old man, what are you so happy about. So what if that little bastard is a Symbol Master? Do you really think he can compare to Gu Ying? Since the brat has revealed his hand, Gu Ying will naturally take care of him. Let's see if you still have anything to be happy about when that brat is killed!" Even though Lei Bao was initially shocked, he quickly regained his calm and shook his head in ridicule of Lin Zhentian. Lei Bao did not believe that Lin Dong had reached the level of being able to contend against the

2nd Seal Symbol Master Gu Ying!

Lin Zhentian's heart slightly shuddered. Although Lin Dong had hidden his abilities rather deeply, his current enemy was incomparable to those at Lei Pi's level.

“Let us wait and see!”

Lin Zhentian's face did not betray the trace of worry he felt in his heart. Without further ado, he chuckled as two of his fingers curled up and thrust towards Lei Bao, a strong gale following the attack. In response, the latter hastily gathered his full power and prepared to receive the blow.

...

“This brat should only be a 1st Seal Symbol Master right? But why is his Mental Energy so powerful?”

Gu Ying was likewise surprised by the Mental Energy that had spread out from Lin Dong's mind, but soon after, the killing intent in his heart grew even thicker. Gu Ying was a ruthless character, since he had formed a grudge with another, he needed to thoroughly destroy this opponent to avoid any future trouble!

“Tch!”

In the same instance when this intention surfaced in his mind, the two handle less blades by Gu Ying's side transformed into two

after images as they shot towards Lin Dong's throat and heart respectively like a burst of lightning.

However, the swift blade attack that seemed exceedingly difficult to dodge from Lin Xiao's and the rest's viewpoint did not seem impossible to ward off under Lin Dong's Mental Energy observation. Immediately, his finger jabbed out as a few "Shattered Yuan Shrapnel" burst out. Joined together in a line, the head of one touching the tail of another, they heavily slammed against the blades, directly deflecting the attack.

"This brat has a decent control."

After the blade was blocked, Gu Ying's figure flashed and appeared before Lin Dong. Both of Gu Ying's eyes flashed as a strong Mental Energy ferociously dashed towards Lin Dong.

"Bang!"

The noiseless Mental Energy collided and then exploded in front of Lin Dong. Immediately, the two figured shuddered. A Mental Energy clash was much more dangerous than Yuan Power clashing. A single misstep would very likely result in serious and lasting repercussions.

"Again!"

The collision between Mental Energy caused Lin Dong's eyebrows to furrow. Yet, excitement burned in his eyes. This was

the first time he was part of a Symbol Master battle, thus everything felt fresh and exciting for him.

As the shout echoed out, Lin Dong did not retreat but instead took the initiative to attack. Like how Gu Ying had done it previously, Mental Energy fiercely rushed towards the latter. At the same time, the “Shattered Yuan Shrapnel” that revolved around his body also darted at Gu Ying’s whole body in succession like a viper.

The two figures were like a hurricane as they exchanged blows in the huge hall at rapid speed. Wherever they passed, the Mental Energy clashes caused some of the unlucky bystanders to turn deathly white.

As the fight continued, Gu Ying’s expression gradually turned more and more serious. He had discovered that although Lin Dong’s Mental Energy usage at the start was rather crude, as time elapsed, the latter seemed to be constantly improving how he manipulated Mental Energy. That level of power became increasingly stronger until in the end, even Gu Ying was forced to bring out his full might.

“This brat’s Mental Energy is absolutely unlike that of a First Seal Symbol Master’s!”

Yet another collision of Mental Energy caused the two’s bodies to tremble in response. Gu Ying’s figure hastily retreated, a cold light shining from his eyes. Strong Mental Energy gushed out from his mind, yet this time, it did not transform into a shock wave and blast out. Instead, it rapidly condensed in front of him.

“Brat, though your Mental Energy is strong, the way you use it is still shallow. This is your current weak point. However, you no longer need to care about it in the future!”

The corners of Gu Ying’s mouth formed into a sinister smile as the Mental Energy before him actually slowly condensed into an illusionary stake-like shape that was as thick as a finger.

This time, the Mental Energy was no longer illusionary but instead, it’s form was faintly discernible!

Evidently, Gu Ying truly intended to kill!

Chapter 96: Destiny Soul Symbol

“Mental Energy materialization?”

As he stared at that object rapidly taking shape in front of Gu Ying, Lin Dong was stunned. Even though most of what he knew of Mental Energy was found out by his own trial and error during cultivation, he had still heard of how powerful Mental Energy materialization was.

Of course, based on Gu Ying’s current strength, he was obviously unable to fully materialize Mental Energy. Nonetheless, this attack was still very powerful. If this blow landed on a Heavenly Yuan Late Stage expert, he would very likely suffer critical mental damage. Compared to a physical wound, such damage was several times more devastating.

Thus, when he saw Gu Ying utilizing this skill, Lin Dong’s facial expression turned exceptionally serious. At the same time, the black shadows that were circling around his body, swiftly shot towards Gu Ying in an attempt to halt the attack.

“Ding Ding!”

In response to Lin Dong’s disruptive attempt, Gu Ying remained calm and composed as he deftly pointed his fingers. The blades around him danced like glowing swirls as they deflected all of the Shattered Yuan Shrapnels.

“Little boy, later on I will show you a Symbol Master’s ultimate

secret technique!”

That needle-like object became increasingly condensed. Immediately, Gu Ying chuckled at Lin Dong as the former’s finger viciously jabbed forward!

“Materialized Spirit Needle!”

After Gu Ying shouted, that needle-like object instantly started buzzing. It shuddered slightly for a moment and with a swoosh sound, it turned into a beam of light and violently flew towards Lin Dong.

Upon seeing the “Materialized Spirit Needle” flying towards him, Lin Dong felt a chill run up his spine as he hastily retreated. Meanwhile, with a swing of his hand, nine Shattered Yuan Shrapnels burst forward and heavily clashed against the “Materialized Spirit Needle”.

“Buzz!”

In the split second right before they collided, that light beam passed through the nine Shattered Yuan Shrapnels at a terrifying speed and continued flying towards Lin Dong without a fall in pace!

When he saw that that light beam had directly penetrated the shield he made using Shattered Yuan Shrapnel, Lin Dong’s facial expression slightly changed. The Destiny Symbol in his Niwan

Palace started to vibrate violently as a powerful Mental Energy quickly gathered before him and formed a Mental Energy barrier.

When facing a Mental Energy attack, one must use Mental Energy to defend!

“Bang!”

Just as Lin Dong’s Mental Energy barrier formed, that light beam arrived in flash and ferociously slammed onto it!

This time, when it encountered the Mental Energy Barrier, the light beam finally slowed down. However, it still flew at a steady pace towards Lin Dong’s forehead.

Drips of sweat were now pouring down Lin Dong’s cheeks as his eyes stared unblinkingly at that incoming light beam. Streams of Mental Energy continuously gushed out from the Destiny Symbol inside his Niwan palace. Like a quagmire, it wrapped around that deadly beam and tried to forcefully slow it down.

At a distance away, both of Gu Ying’s fingers were pointed out as he added more Mental Energy onto that light beam, trying to breakthrough Lin Dong’s defense. Right now, both of them were practically competing directly to see whose Mental Energy was stronger!

Both of them were suddenly eerily quiet. Yet no one dared to step near on account of their previous terrifying exchange.

Both of Lin Dong's eyes were peeled onto that flickering light beam that was directed towards him. As that beam got closer to him, Lin Dong could feel an increasing sense of danger. He knew that if this object penetrated into his mind, not only would his Destiny Symbol be forcefully destroyed, but after which, no matter how talented he was in Mental Energy, he would never be able to accomplish anything in it ever again.

“Killing me won't be so easy!”

At this crucial moment, Lin Dong's heart flared up. He urged on the Destiny Symbol in his Niwan palace as it shook violently, as if he wanted to forcefully squeeze out all of his Mental Energy and actually managed to slowly push back the light beam.

“Why is this brat so difficult to deal with?!”

Faced with this deadlock situation, Gu Ying was stunned. He could not understand why Lin Dong, a First Seal Symbol Master, was able to match up to him in terms of Mental Energy.

“I, Gu Ying have lived through countless battlefields. I don't believe that I can't handle a snot-nosed brat like you!”

In the face of such a stalemate, Gu Ying felt slightly enraged. If the other fellas at Yan City knew how far he had been forced by a mere boy, he would definitely be mocked endlessly.

As red-hot anger boiled in his heart, Gu Ying suddenly bit his tongue, two light beam shooting out from his eyes. Immediately, these two light beams formed into two Symbols!

This Gu Ying had actually summoned his own Destiny Symbols from his Niwan Palace!

After summoning his Destiny Symbols, Gu Ying laughed at Lin Dong before he shouted out. Immediately, waves of Mental Energy emerged from these two Destiny Symbols and viciously flew towards Lin Dong, who was still trying to hold back the “Materialized Spirit Needle”.

When he witnessed this scene, Lin Dong was also shocked. Just as he contemplated on how to handle this situation, the Destiny Symbol in his Niwan Palace suddenly began to vibrate violently. Immediately, Lin Dong lost control of it as it directly flew out of his Niwan Palace, and emerged at the center of his forehead.

This sudden development caused Lin Dong’s facial expression to change drastically. He never expected that his Destiny Symbol would actually escape on its own!

“Swish!”

Just as his Destiny Symbol appeared, it immediately dashed towards Gu Ying’s Destiny Symbols. As it flew through the air, the Ancient Swirl Symbol began warp rapidly until eventually, to the bewilderment of Lin Dong and Gu Ying, it warped into a palm-sized vortex.

“Destiny Soul Symbol?!”

The change in the Ancient Swirl Symbol did not invoke any special response from Lin Dong. However, that Gu Ying began to panic as he shouted out. Immediately, he tried to recall his two Destiny Symbols.

However, just as he attempted to recall his Destiny Symbols, that vortex viciously dashed over. A suction force emitted from it and under this suction force, Lin Dong could clearly feel that the Mental Energy contained within Gu Ying’s Destiny Symbols, were actually being sucked into that swirl.

This situation caused Lin Dong to gasp in surprise. Even though he did not know much about Mental Energy, he had never heard of anyone’s Destiny Symbol possessing this horrifying ability.

“Buzz Buzz!”

Under the suction force of that swirl, Gu Ying’s Destiny Symbols began to dim rapidly. Meanwhile, his physical body was also affected and he spit out a mouthful of fresh blood. Even though with a somewhat distorted expression on his face, he gritted his teeth and desperately retreated with his two Destiny Symbols in tow. Finally, they escaped the range of the vortex and rapidly returned to his Niwan Palace.

When Gu Ying’s Destiny Symbols returned to his Niwan Palace, that swirl distorted yet again as it transformed into an simple-

looking Symbol before it rapidly flew back. Then, as it hung over just above the center of Lin Dong's forehead, it released a suction force and absorbed that "Materialized Spirit Needle" before leisurely returning to Lin Dong's Niwan Palace.

The instant his Ancient Swirl Symbol returned, Lin Dong vividly felt a more powerful Mental Energy quickly spreading out from the symbol.

"This Ancient Swirl Symbol absorbed Gu Ying's Mental Energy and gave it to me..."

When he sensed this, Lin Dong's hands began to tremble involuntarily. He had never expected that this Ancient Swirl Symbol he had chanced upon actually possessed such a unique ability.

"Most Symbol Masters can only condense Destiny Symbols. I have never heard of a Destiny Soul Symbol... Could it be due to that object?" As Lin Dong recalled Gu Ying's screams, he began thinking to himself.

"You actually have a Destiny Soul Symbol?!"

While Lin Dong was muttering to himself, Gu Ying once again opened his mouth. Although his face was pale, his eyes were peeled on Lin Dong, a burning greed contained within.

"Boy, hand me this Destiny Soul Symbol cultivation method and

I will help your Lin Family destroy the Xie and Lei Families. I don't want any other reward. Just that! How about it?"

The corners of Lin Dong's eyes twitched. Before the dueled, he already knew that this person was rather shrewd. However, he never expected such a shrewd person would actually spew such silly words at this time. It seems like this Ancient Swirl Symbol was indeed special.

"Sure."

Lin Dong's eyes lit up as he slightly smiled. At the same time, he rapidly walked forward as he took out a piece of jade and offered it to Gu Ying.

Lin Dong's actions caused Gu Ying to leap for joy. However, just as he took two steps forward, he suddenly realised the situation that he was in. His enemy was no fool, why would he hand over such an important item so easily?

"Buzz!"

However, just as he stopped mid-step, a powerful force was directed towards him. Two shadows shot towards his chest in a flash.

"Ding!"

At this critical moment, Gu Ying immediately utilized his blades

to deflect the attack. However, just as heaved a sigh of relief and planned to retreat, an exceptionally powerful Mental Energy attack was instantaneously directed towards him. It violently bombarded his mind, causing his entire head to buzz. Meanwhile, the two Destiny Symbols in his Niwan Palace turned completely dark.

Though he was only dazed for that tiny moment, when Gu Ying woke up again, the young man's face was already inches away and in his hand, a shadow ruthlessly thrust forward.

“Stop! I will not interfere in your affairs anymore!”

Right now, every hair in Gu Ying's body stood up as he smelt his impending doom at which he hastily shouted out.

Lin Dong's facial expression did not change. Without any signs of stopping, the razor-sharp Shattered Yuan Shrapnel in his hand immediately turned into a black shadow as it mercilessly pierced Gu Ying's throat.

“Grand Master Gu, it's too late. You should not have interfered in our affairs!”

A sharp pain emerged as a youth's voice sounded out in Gu Ying's ears.

Chapter 97: Kill!

From start to end, Lin Dong's actions did not carry even the slightest hint of hesitation. Even Gu Ying did not expect that this immature looking youngster could be so ruthless and not the least bit sloppy when he finally executed the killing blow.

The sharp pain from his throat caused Gu Ying to be unable to make any noise as blood continuously overflowed from his mouth. His eyes were staring at that youth's face with a hint of fear. No matter what, he was still the deputy head of Yan City's Blood Cloth Sect. Therefore, he had thought that even if any mishaps occur, the Lin Family would not dare to harm him due to his status. However, the cold reality made him understand that this time, he had overextended himself...

If he had brought along some experts, how could he have ended up in such a sorry state?

As his vision rapidly darkened, his hands defiantly latched onto Lin Dong's arms. With bloody foam bubbling out from his mouth, his barely understandable voice was tinged with hatred and resentment as it sounded out in Lin Dong's ears: "The Blood Cloth Sect will not let this matter rest!"

Lin Dong's facial expression did not change. In this short period of time, he understood that Gu Ying was someone who would definitely seek vengeance even for the most pettiest of grievances. If they merely repelled him this time, he would definitely be a major threat in the future. Since he had his eye on the Lin Family's Yang Yuan Lode, the next time he returned, he would probably

bring along every expert in the Blood Cloth Sect...

Even though Lin Dong was still young, he clearly knew the consequences of releasing a tiger back into the mountains. Therefore, it was best to finish off a person like Gu Ying right now. After all, once he returned, the Lin Family would definitely face an even graver danger than today.

As he extracted the Shattered Yuan Shrapnel from Gu Ying's throat, Lin Dong promptly extended his arm into Gu Ying's clothes. Moments later, he actually pulled out a Qian Kun Bag and unceremoniously kept it. Then, with a jerk of his arm, Gu Ying's corpse slowly began to slump.

“Thud!”

The sound of the corpse falling was not distinct in the chaotic hall. However, at this moment, several people's minds seemed to have received a jolt as gazes were involuntarily directed towards his direction.

When these gazes found Gu Ying's corpse, the air in the large hall seemed to freeze up. Even the war cries from outside the hall seemed to have stealthily faded away...

“Gu Ying died?”

Everyone's hearts were in turmoil as they gazed at the wide-eyed staring corpse of Gu Ying looking as if he had died with grievances.

They were evidently unable to associate the current him with that majestic look of a 2nd Seal Symbol Master that he had before.

These gazes lingered on Gu Ying's corpse for a while before they violently turned towards the youth nearby. When they saw that bloodied Shattered Yuan Shrapnel in that boy's hand, a sudden chill ran through their bodies.

2nd Seal Symbol Master. Even in Yan City, a person like this would be treated as a VIP by every faction. However, right now, this "VIP" was actually killed by a mere sixteen or seventeen years old youngster.

This scene was too mind-blowing, so mind-blowing that one could hardly believe it.

"The Lin Family is going to be victorious..."

When they gradually recovered their senses, this thought flashed across several people's minds. The strength that the Lin Family had displayed today vastly exceeded all of their expectations. This strength was something that even the Lei and Xie Family alliance could not hope to match up against.

"Bang!"

In the middle of the large hall, two figures were sweeping across it like a hurricane. No one dared to obstruct their passage. Even the mere aftershocks of a battle between two Initial Yuan Dan

practitioners was not something that a Heavenly Yuan Expert could handle.

Lin Zhentian and Lei Bao had fought bitterly for a while. However, since they were both at Initial Yuan Dan Stage, it was impossible for them to settle this duel in a short period of time.

Nonetheless, after a long duel, numerous traces of injuries had appeared all over their bodies and their powers seemed to have weakened. Having tangled for so long, it was expected that they had expended much of their energy.

“Gu Ying is dead!”

When this alarmed cry rang out in the giant hall. The two figures, which were originally stable, suddenly staggered. Immediately, their eyes turned towards the same direction as an ice-cold corpse on the ground appeared in their visions.

“Gulp...”

When they two of them saw the corpse, they almost simultaneously gulped. Meanwhile, Lei Bao’s face turned a chilling white. After all, he had never expected that Gu Ying would not only fail to kill Lin Dong, but instead end up killed by the latter.

Of course, besides Lei Bao, even Lin Zhentian, whom always had quite a lot of faith in Lin Dong, had to violently suck in two breaths before he could accept this dream-like scenario that had occurred.

At first, he thought that Lin Dong would only be able to delay Gu Ying. However... he never expected that Lin Dong would directly chose the most efficient method.

“Gu Ying, your trump card is no more!” Lin Zhentian slowly said.

A dark expression hung on Lei Bao's face as he stared at Lin Zhentian. Suddenly, he released an eerie laugh as he muttered: “Old Ghost Lin, you should not be celebrating so soon. Gu Ying is the deputy head of the Blood Cloth Sect and since he died at the hands of Lin Dong. Hehe, the Blood Cloth Sect will definitely pursue this matter. At that time, your Lin Family will all be slaughtered until no chickens or dogs are left!”

“I have said this before, my Lin Family is like a solid piece of bone. Whoever wants to take a bite out of us must be prepared for their teeth to crack. This is what happened to your Lei Family and the same will happen to the Blood Cloth Sect!” Lin Zhentian icily chuckled. Since the situation had already evolved to this stage, no further words were necessary. After all, even if they did not kill Gu Ying, the latter was probably not going to drop this matter so easily. Therefore, it was better to directly finish him off.

“Once I destroy your old bones, the Lin Family will naturally crumble!” Lei Bao eerily laughed as he said. After all, the Lin Family's base was still weak and their core member was Lin Zhentian. Hence, once he fell, the Lin Family would have no reason to exist.

“If you want to destroy this old man’s bones, I am afraid you don’t have the ability!” Lin Zhentian arrogantly laughed as he said.

“We shall see!”

Lei Bao chuckled as a powerful Pure Yuan Gang Energy swiftly gathered on his arms. Its bright glow was akin to an electricity as it swiftly spread out with a deep roar. That stance was the Lei Family’s Grade 4 Martial Arts, Dashing Lightning Ball. However, in the hands of Lei Bao, this Grade 4 Martial Arts looked like a thousand lightning bolts gathering together, extremely terrifying.

“Bang!”

Lei Bao’s leg viciously stomped on the ground. His body was just like a fluttering mass of light as he rapidly dashed towards Lin Zhentian. As he dashed forward, the floor on the giant hall was forcefully split apart causing several inches deep cracks to appear.

When he saw Lei Bao practically using his full might to attack, Lin Zhentian did not even plan to retreat for a moment. He gripped his hands together as he began to form a series of hand-seals.

These hand seals were rather familiar. Upon closer inspection, one would realize that this was the Lin Family’s Wonder Gate Seal. However, when Lin Zhentian reached the end of the incomplete chapter, he did not stop. Instead, he continued to execute different hand seals. This was because Lin Dong had long imparted the third chapter of Wonder Gate Seal to Lin Zhentian and the rest. Therefore, right now, this Wonder Gate Seal was no longer

incomplete!

A strong and solid Pure Yuan Gang Energy swiftly condensed between Lin Zhentian's hand and his rapidly changing hand seals finally ended when he finished the third chapter. At that moment, a glaringly bright seal crystallized!

When that glowing seal crystallized, Lin Zhentian lifted his head. As he faced the figure of light that was rapidly growing larger in his eyes, without a moment's hesitation, he immediately launched his fist. In the next instance, a deep sonic boom sound echoed from that glowing seal as it viciously slammed against that glowing mass!

“Boom!”

A powerful shockwave exploded in the middle of the large hall, as every door in the hall was instantly reduced to dust. A powerful wind emerged from the epicenter and even the sorry figures of Heavenly Yuan Stage experts were forcefully blown out of the large hall and into the courtyard.

“Bang!”

Just as everyone was blown out of the large hall, the pillars of the large hall began to collapse. In just a few seconds, amidst a loud commotion, the entire giant hall was reduced to a pile of rubble...

The open area outside the hall quickly became extremely chaotic.

When forces on both sides landed on the ground, they immediately turned to look at that pile of rubble. After all, everyone knew that this battle was the decisive one.

“Boom!”

Amidst the gazes of the crowd a bloodied figure was violently ejected from the middle of that dust cloud hovering above the rubble before he awkwardly landed on the ground, his bloodied body on the verge of collapse.

“Father!”

When they saw the identity of the figure, Lin Xiao and the rest were instantly delighted.

However, before their happiness could fully take shape on their faces, nearby, a figure suddenly violently dashed forward. Meanwhile, a sharp dagger in his hand was violently directed towards the stumbling Lin Zhentian.

“Xie Qian!”

This sudden development caused Lin Xiao and the rest’s facial expression to change drastically. When they saw the identity of that perpetrator, shouts immediately rang out.

However, Xie Qian chose to disregard their shouts. He was keenly aware of how important Lin Zhentian was to the Lin Family. If he

could take that man's life, the Lin Family will surely fall apart!

Right now, their Lei and Xie Families were definitely at a disadvantaged position. If Lin Zhentian survived, they would be doomed forever!

“Time to die old ghost!”

Xie Qian's speed was terrifying quick. In a flash, he appeared in front of the extremely weak Lin Zhentian. Meanwhile, under the horrified gazes of Lin Xiao and the rest, the dagger violently arced towards the latter's throat.

“Shlick!”

The deep sound of blade cutting flesh echoed out as fresh blood spluttered out. Xie Qian's arm suddenly stopped as he slowly lowered his head only to see that mysteriously, a handle less blade had penetrated his chest. He immediately spat out a mouthful of fresh blood.

When he fell to the ground, he saw a young man's figure unhurriedly emerging from within that dusty rubble. Promptly, two gradually icy cold corpses were gently cast aside.

Gu Ying, Lei Bao.

The entire crowd instantly turned quiet in that instance as all of them stared, wide-eyed, at the corpses. Right now everyone

knew...

The Lei Family was finished...

Chapter 98: Hidden Danger

From a wedding celebration to an all out war and then finally ending in the deaths of Lei Bao and Xie Qian. When everyone present saw the deaths of these two characters, they all understood that the Lei and Xie Families, which had been amply prepared, were still unable to successfully strike down the Lin Family. On the contrary, the Lei and Xie Families had suffered immensely under the counter-attack of the latter.

And this cost that they suffered would very likely spell the end of these two long-standing Families.

Having lost their two main pillars of support, the Lei and Xie Families' standing in Qinyang Town would steadily decline. It would be an impossible feat for them to return to the golden days they had enjoyed before.

And very evidently, this dispute, that had been started by the Lei and Xie Families, had instead caused the reputation of the Lin Family to soar. Never again would anyone dare to look down on this considerably "young" Family.

In the wake of the Lei and Xie Families defeat, the Lin Family once again shifted back some of their women and children to Qinyang Town. Previously, the businesses which had temporarily shut down due to the dangerous situation also started up once more. The current Lin Family was akin to a sun that was soaring into the skies, without the Lei and Xie Families to suppress and threaten them, the Lin Family was now considered as the undisputed number one faction in Qinyang Town.

This newly established reputation drew quite a few experts interest to join the Lin Family and with regards to this situation, the Lin Family was also rather happy. Although these experts required a substantial pay, these costs were insignificant to the Lin Family who possessed a Yang Yuan Mining Lode.

Moreover, the Lin Family had also suffered significant losses on the day they had warred against the Xie and Lei Families. Thus, it was necessary for them to recruit and gather more manpower during this time. And so, after some checking, the Lin Family recruited the comparatively less dubious experts, causing their strength to soar over this period.

While Lin Zhentian and the rest were busy tidying up the after-battle affairs, Lin Dong once more returned to the mountainous area the Lin Family had used to occupy. Ever since his identity as a Symbol Master had been revealed, his position in the Lin Family had reached a fairly high level such that even when Lin Zhentian was talking to this grandson of his, his aged face would be filled with kindness and pride.

Of course, the fact that this seventeen year old grandson of his was at the Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage and also a First Seal Symbol Master was definitely worth being proud of. This level of accomplishment would be considered extremely good even within the Lin Clan, where geniuses were as common as the clouds in the sky.

Everyone understood that the old Grandfather had again placed his hope of returning to the Lin Clan on Lin Dong. However, no

one knew if Lin Dong would be capable of performing the same dazzling feats in the Lin Clan Gathering three years later.

On a cliff within the mountainous area, Lin Dong was quietly seated. Around him, waves of Yuan Power bubbled and gushed about before slowly pouring into his body, enriching his Dan Tian.

While he trained his Yuan Power, the Destiny Symbol within Lin Dong's Niwan Palace also beat rhythmically like a heart. Portions of Mental Energy curled around the symbol and flowed in and out from time to time. Through this cycle, bit by bit, the Mental Energy became more condensed.

Lin Dong's current Mental Energy had become much stronger after forcefully draining quite a large amount of Mental Energy from Gu Ying's Destiny Symbol. Towards this, even Lin Dong himself was rather astonished. Only now did he faintly realise how extraordinary an origin his "Ancient Swirl Symbol" probably had. Else it would not be so tyrannical...

"Huff....."

After training for about two hours, Lin Dong finally spat out a ball of white Qi as his eyes slowly opened. His eyes shined for a moment before the light disappeared.

"I would probably still need about a month before I can advance to Heavenly Yuan Late Stage. Afterall, Qingyuan Art is too low tier, it is already unable to meet the needs of the Heavenly Yuan Stage."

Though his training session had ended, Lin Dong's eyebrows lightly pursed together. He had already stagnated at Heavenly Yuan Middle Stage for about four months, yet the feeling of a breakthrough still did not arrive. This caused him to feel a little frustrated and he had put the blame on the low tier Secret Art he practised.

Naturally, if this was known by Lin Ken, Lin Mang and the rest, they would probably vomit blood. They had already stagnated at this stage for several years. Though there were signs of an upcoming breakthrough recently, the total amount of time they had wasted at this stage was ten fold more than Lin Dong. If Lin Dong was still not satisfied at his current speed, Lin Ken and Lin Mang might as well be ashamed to death.

As he shook his head, the thoughts in Lin Dong's heart were cast aside. The current Lin Family was swiftly expanding, gradually gobbling up the Lei and Xie Families' numerous properties. This situation was not considered too much since reality is indeed cold and cruel. It was not impossible for struggles between Families to end up in complete annihilation. Lin Dong believed that if the losers of this war was the Lin Family, considering Lei Bao's methods, perhaps nothing would be left of the Lin Family.

“Destiny Soul Seal.....”

Lin Dong's thoughts slightly paused at this point as they shifted towards himself. He had obtained Gu Ying's Qiankun Bag after killing him that day. Lin Dong did not know much about Symbol Masters, after all, when he first met Grandmaster Ruo from Yan City, he had only given Lin Dong the first three sections of

“Spiritual Movement Chapter”. Therefore, Lin Dong’s understanding of Symbol Masters was still stuck at the elementary level.

Fortunately, he had obtained quite a substantial amount of information related to Symbol Masters from Gu Ying’s Qiankun Bag this time. Even information about the “Destiny Soul Symbol” Gu Ying had screeched about was included within.

The Destiny Symbol was of utmost importance to a Symbol Master. Only those who managed to form a Destiny Symbol were able to bring out the might of Mental Energy, and this Destiny Symbol was also divided into its own special grades.

Only three different grades of the Destiny Symbol were recorded within Gu Ying’s information: Destiny Symbol, Destiny Soul Symbol and Destiny Heaven Symbol.

Destiny Symbol was the most ordinary type. It did not have any special abilities. Most Symbol Masters possessed this kind of normal Destiny Symbol.

The Destiny Soul Symbol was a rather rare symbol. This kind of symbol was able to change its form and was also equipped with other unique abilities. For example, Lin Dong’s “Ancient Swirl Symbol” possessed a kind of absorption power.

As for the Destiny Heaven Symbol, it was even more terrifying. It is said that when used, the Destiny Heaven Symbol would devour the earth. Of course, this symbol was too unreal and the books only

introduced it very briefly.

This was also why Gu Ying was shocked to that extent when he saw the “Ancient Swirl Symbol” transform into a vortex that day. After all, this “Destiny Soul Symbol” was extremely rare and if a Symbol Master was able to form such a “Destiny Soul Symbol”, it would undoubtedly be an immense help to his cultivation.

“Is this the Destiny Soul Symbol.....”

Lin Dong blinked a few times as a light beam shot out from his eyes and transformed into a simple symbol which floated before him. He had never imagined that this thing which he had obtained by chance would actually be so mystical.

After all, the ability to absorb other people’s Mental Energy and obtain it for oneself was definitely too terrifying.....

The simple-looking symbol before him hovered for a while before being withdrawn once again into Lin Dong’s Niwan Palace. From Gu Ying’s Qiankun Bag, Lin Dong also found the so-called Secret Spirit Skill.....

Simply put, this was similar to “Martial Arts”. The difference being that Martial Arts was activated or utilised Yuan Power while “Secret Spirit Skill” needed Mental Energy.

This “Secret Spirit Skill” was split into various levels which represented and was named by the three most important aspects

that made up a human. From low to high, Essence, Qi, Spirit.

Prior to the Essence Level, there was still a normal level. The Secret Spirit Skills of most Symbol Masters were at this level.

Although the “Materialized Spirit Needle” that Gu Ying used that day sounded rather domineering, it was only a normal Secret Spirit Skill. To obtain a strong Secret Spirit Skill was not such an easy feat.

“The Symbol Master’s path is indeed profound and mysterious.....”

Lin Dong massaged the space between his eyebrows and soon after, he took out Gu Ying’s Qiankun Bag. His lips slowly pursed as his eyebrows tightly furrowed.

Though the they had emerged victorious in the struggle against the Lei and Xie Families, an even bigger danger was left behind.....

This hidden danger was naturally Yan City’s Blood Cloth Sect. Lin Dong had killed the Blood Cloth Sect’s deputy head. If news of this got out, given the style of the Blood Cloth Sect, they definitely not let this matter rest.

And this matter constantly pressured Lin Zhentian and the rest of the Lin Family core members. Even though they did not show it on the surface, Lin Dong knew that they were worried.

The Blood Cloth Sect's revenge would be incomparable to the Lei and Xie Families!

After all, the Blood Cloth Sect was one of the faction in Yan City and their power was much stronger than the Lei and Xie Families'. If they mustered a large avenging force, the Lin Family would once again face the prospects of being completely annihilated.

And these recent signs of growth into a towering presence in Qingyang Town would be smashed to bits!

Many factions in Qingyang Town were already aware of this fact. Thus even though the current Lin Family was enjoying their rapid expansion, only a few factions came forward to express their good will. Everyone knew that this period would perhaps only last for a short time.....

The Blood Cloth Sect was like a sharp sword which hung above the Lin Family's neck. This sword would definitely swipe down at a certain point in time. That scene was not one that Lin Dong would be happy to see.

Deeply sighing, Lin Dong tightly clenched his fist. Even he felt an enormous pressure when faced with that somewhat famous faction from Yan City.

“No matter who it is, anyone who wants to exterminate my Lin Family would have to pay a bloody price!”

Lin Dong's lips tightly pursed together, a cold light shining in his eyes. Like how Lin Zhentian had put it, their Lin Family was a hard piece of bone, whoever wanted to gnaw on them should be prepared for their teeth to shatter!

Chapter 99: The “Rat” within the Stone Talisman

The atmosphere was faintly stifling in the brightly lit room. Lin Zhentian, Lin Xiao and a few others were seated in this room with rather serious expressions on their faces.

“Father, we have successfully restarted all the business that we had previously neglected. Soon, they will all be back on track.” Lin Xiao looked at Lin Zhentian, who had a stern expression on his face, as he softly said.

“Yes.”

Lin Zhentian absent mindedly nodded his head. Moments later, he suddenly lifted his head and looked at Lin Xiao and the rest, sighing: “At first, I thought that after we defeated the Lei and Xie Families, our Lin Family will be able to enjoy prosperous days. Unfortunately, right now, it seems like we have offended another powerful faction: the Blood Cloth Sect.”

“Father, Dong-er acted rashly. I have failed in my teachings...” Lin Xiao stayed silent for a moment before he promptly said. He knew that during this period of time, Lin Zhentian had constantly wrecked his brains over this issue. After all, the Lei and Xie Families could not be compared to the Blood Cloth Sect.

“It’s not Dong-er’s fault. Gu Ying is a vicious and greedy man. Even if we let him live, he will still be a threat to us. Therefore, it does not matter whether we killed him or not.” Lin Zhentian

waved his hand as he said.

“If we must blame someone, we should blame that crafty old ghost Lei Bao. He actually dared to reveal the existence of the Yang Yuan Stone Mining Lode to these jackals...”

“Father, what should we do? I have sent several men to investigate the Blood Cloth Sect. Right now, the reason why they haven’t made a move is most likely because they are still investigating our Lin Family’s strength. Once they have finished their investigations...” Lin Ken deeply echoed.

“The head of Blood Cloth Sect is Wei Tong and he is at Yuan Dan Small Full Circle Stage. Under his command, is a follower who recently advanced to Initial Yuan Dan Stage. Meanwhile, they have about ten Heavenly Yuan Late Stage experts. Their strength is something that our Lin Family cannot match up against.” Lin Zhentian slowly said. During this period of time, he had utilized every means in order to investigate Blood Cloth Sect’s strength. However, the more he knew, the greater the anxiety in his heart.

“Yuan Dan Small Full Circle.”

Upon hearing these words, Lin Xiao and the rests’ facial expressions changed. Even though this was only one stage above Initial Yuan Dan, these two stages were totally incomparable. Therefore, even Lin Zhentian would not be a challenge for Wu Tong. Furthermore, there was another follower in the Blood Cloth Sect that reached Initial Yuan Dan Stage. Overall, this kind of strength vastly exceeded that of the Lei and Xie Families’.

Under this immense pressure exerted by their potential enemy, Lin Xiao and the rest turned silent.

“Lin Xiao, secretly transfer some of our younger generation members over this period of time. In case of a mishap, the bloodline of our family will still be preserved.” Lin Zhentian’s wrinkled face was evidently tired as he waved his hand and said.

Upon hearing these words, Lin Xiao and the rest gripped their fists. At this juncture, they must start preparing for the worst outcomes...

“The Yang Yuan Stone Mining Lode is an extremely valuable treasure. Once the Blood Cloth Sect knows about its existence, they will try every means to snatch it away. Furthermore, right now, they have a perfect excuse...” With a pained smile, Lin Zhentian said: “Therefore, it’s only a matter of time before they make their move.”

“Lin Xiao, you must remember. If the Blood Cloth Sect really attacks us, you must protect Dong-er even at the expense of your life. His talent is extremely astonishing and he will definitely become a great person in the future!”

“Alright, it’s late now. All you should head back and rest.”

Lin Zhentian sighed, evidently did not wish to speak further. With a wave of his hand, he dismissed Lin Xiao and the rest.

“Yes.”

As they stared at that old man’s tired expression, Lin Xiao and the rest could only nod their heads as they silently left his room. It seems like it was not easy to be the head of this family...”

...

Just as Lin Xiao and the rest left the room, inside a room deep within the Lin Family estate, Lin Dong who was sitting on a bed slowly opened his eyes. Based on his current strength, it was easy for him to eavesdrop on any conversation without getting caught.

“Yuan Dan Small Full Circle...”

Lin Dong tightly pursed his lips. Right now, based on his current strength, if he utilized all his Mental Energy, he could probably match up with a Initial Yuan Dan stage practitioner. However, if he met a Yuan Dan Small Full Circle expert, his chances of victory would be extremely low.

“It will take at most half a month before the Blood Cloth Sect thoroughly investigates our Lin Family’s strength. At that time, due to the allure of the Yang Yuan Stone Mining Lode, they will definitely attack us...”

Lin Dong’s eye flickered. In half a month, what could he hope to accomplish? At the very most, he could breakthrough to Heavenly

Yuan Late Stage. However, even that would not be enough to match up against Wei Tong, who was at Yuan Dan Small Full Circle Stage.

“Huff...”

Lin Dong deeply exhaled. Perhaps, he could not accomplish much in half a month, nonetheless, he did not plan to give up so easily. After all, the Lin Family had labored painstakingly to reach their current stage. Therefore, he did not want to see his family get utterly destroyed.

As his fingertips gently tapped on his right palm, Lin Dong slowly closed his eyes. When both of his eyes were shut, with a flick in his mind, that familiar dark Spiritual Domain once again resurfaced.

Currently, within the Stone Talisman's Spiritual Domain, were the same few glowing shadows. However, that Wonder Gate Seal glowing shadow had now thoroughly perfected that incomplete Martial Arts.

Right now, all four chapters of the Wonder Gate Seal was complete. Based on Lin Dong's calculations, it was perhaps able to match up to some Grade 5 Martial Arts. Therefore, besides Mental Energy, this was Lin Dong's most powerful weapon. Even though he could not hope to rely on this skill to defeat the Blood Cloth Sect's leader, Wei Tong, it could still be considered as one of his trump cards.

Lin Dong stood before these glowing shadows. However, he did

not start practising as before. Instead, this time, armed with an inquisitive gaze, he began to slowly scan this dark space.

The current Lin Dong had fairly strong mastery of Mental Energy. Thus, matters that were unimaginable to him in the past, no longer surprised him anymore. For example, Lin Dong estimated that this Spiritual Domain was probably constructed within this Stone Talisman. Meanwhile, the body he had now was probably not his real body but rather something formed by his Mental Energy.

At the same time, as his Mental Energy grew more powerful, Lin Dong uncovered more mysteries behind the Stone Talisman. Therefore, Lin Dong was very curious to find out, besides perfecting martial arts and refining elixirs, what other abilities does this Stone Talisman possess?

Lin Dong earnestly looked about this dark Spiritual Domain. However, as time passed, nothing unexpected happened here. The space was still calm as before.

However, Lin Dong continued observing for half an hour before he sat down on the ground. Streams of Mental Energy began to spread out as they meticulously swept across each inch of this darkness.

However, perhaps because this space was strange, Lin Dong realized that he was expending a huge amount of Mental Energy in order to scan this area. In just ten minutes, Lin Dong began to feel his senses blur.

However this situation did not cause Lin Dong to slow down. Rather, his youthful grit and tenacity began to display itself as he stubbornly chose to release waves of Mental Energy and continued to scan the area.

The dark Spiritual Domain was utterly silent as waves of Mental Energy silently spread out like a ripple.

“Huff....”

This scanning continued for a long period of time. An exhausted expression slowly began to surface on Lin Dong’s face. However, his “scanning” ultimately did not yield any fruitful results.

“Perhaps I am overthinking...”

As he muttered to himself, Lin Dong furrowed his eyebrows. After searching fruitlessly for a long period of time, he had no choice but to give up on this meaningless endeavor. With a flick of his mind, he quickly dispersed his Mental Energy.

As his Mental Energy began to disperse, within the darkness, a nearby inaudible sigh echoed out.

“Who?!”

This sigh was barely audible. However, right now, Lin Dong’s

eyes were wide open as he turned to look at a particular dark area and shouted.

Just as he shouted, every hair on Lin Dong's body stood up. It seems like he was not the only person in this dark Spiritual Domain!

As he became more familiar with the Mysterious Stone Talisman, Lin Dong could feel that when he used this Stone Talisman to refine Elixirs, some parts of the medicinal power would be absorbed by the Stone Talisman. In fact, that day when it absorbed that bewitching flower deep within the mining lode, most of the medicinal power within that flower was not absorbed by Lin Dong, but rather, it all flew into the Stone Talisman!

These daily minute observations caused Lin Dong to turn suspicious. This was one of the reasons why he chose to carefully scan the Stone Talisman's Spiritual Domain.

After Lin Dong shouted, the entire dark Spiritual Domain turned silent again. This sensation almost made that sigh from before, seem like his misconception.

However Lin Dong was certain that it was not a mistake. As he seriously looked at that black area, streams of Mental Energy quickly materialized in front of him. In the blink of an eye, he had materialized an extremely thin and long needle. This was the "Spirit Divine Needle" that Gu Ying had utilized before.

Even though this was only a normal Secret Spirit Art, it was after

all one of the few Secret Spirit Arts that Lin Dong had mastered.

“If you do not reveal yourself, I shall attack!”

The “Spirit Divine Needle” that hovered before Lin Dong slightly twinkled. Meanwhile, Lin Dong’s voice slowly echoed out in this dark Spiritual Domain.

Lin Dong’s words did not elicit any response. After witnessing this situation, a cold glint flashed in his eyes. Without further ado, that “Spirit Divine Needle” that was hovering in front of him immediately dashed off and violently shot towards that dark area.

“Buzz!”

As that “Spirit Divine Needle” advanced, in the next moment, a small light suddenly appeared from the darkness before it quickly dashed towards a deeper area in the darkness.

“You plan to run?!”

When he saw this scene, Lin Dong violently jerked his arm. His Mental Energy was like countless ropes as they immediately chased down that glowing shadow before they trapped it and forcefully began to pull it back.

“Boom!”

When that glowing shadow heavily landed in front of Lin Dong, he took a look at it, before a look of amazement surfaced on his face. As the glow weakened, the formed that was revealed before him was actually a palm-sized rat that was pitch-black from head to toe!

However, what caused Lin Dong to feel the most surprised was that inside the black rat's eyes were not fear but rather an extremely human-like anger.

“What is this thing...”

As he stared at the black rat's enraged expression, Lin Dong involuntarily sucked in a deep breath.

Chapter 100: Celestial Demon Marten

“A rat?”

With an astonished look on his face, Lin Dong stared at the palm-sized black rat and involuntarily cried out. He clearly did not expect that the thing which had been hiding in the Stone Talisman would actually be a rat.

“Disgraceful, more like you’re the rat!”

When it heard Lin Dong’s cry, the fur all over the black rat stood up as it’s tiny eyes furiously glared at Lin Dong as it unexpectedly spoke out in human words!

“A talking rat?” Astonished by this black rat, Lin Dong gazed strangely at the small animal. This was the first time he had seen a rat with the ability to talk.

“You unlearned and disgraceful brat, this grandfather is a Celestial Demon Marten, not a rat!” Upon hearing Lin Dong continue to call it a rat, that “black rat” immediately screeched in response.

“Celestial Demon Marten...” After seeing the rat’s exasperated appearance, Lin Dong chuckled and silently nodded his head. This name was rather intimidating, yet the thing reflected in his eyes looked exactly like a normal black rat.

“Alright, I don’t care if you’re a Celestial Demon Marten or a Man-Demon Marten. Tell me why you’re here!” His earlier nervousness had quickly evaporated. Lin Dong discovered that this “Demon Emperor Sable” seemed to be rather weak. Else, it would not have been caught by him so easily.

“Brat, what do you mean why am I here? I’m the owner of this Stone Talisman. Where else would I be if not here?” The tiny eyes on the small black sable flickered as it crossed its claws across its chest and said.

“You are the owner of the Stone Talisman?” Lin Dong was stunned. Soon after, he bent his head and earnestly looked at the small black sable. Under his gaze, that small sable hastily retreated a few steps, prepared to run away at any moment.

“You are not the owner of the Stone Talisman.” After observing the small black sable for a short while, Lin Dong shook his head. Though this small sable was perhaps somewhat special, his intuition told him that this guy was lying.

“Don’t believe me if you want, brat. Now that the Stone Talisman is in your hands, feel free to enter, but let us each mind our own business and not cross one another. This grandfather sable will not disturb you and you should likewise not interfere with the grandfather sable!” The corners of the small sable’s mouth pulled outwards as it declared.

Lin Dong slightly cocked his head to one side and stared at the small sable, suddenly asking: “You seem to be very afraid of me?”

“Haha, haha...”

At these words, that small sable stuck its claws to its waist and faced the sky while pretending to laugh heartily. It looked as if it had just heard the funniest joke ever.

Upon seeing this, Lin Dong slightly smiled as a “Materialized Spirit Needle” once again formed before him.

“Swish!”

When the “Materialized Spirit Needle” fully formed, the then still-laughing small sable quickly scuttled far away with a “swish” sound. It’s tiny eyes somewhat nervously stared at Lin Dong as it’s shrilly voice sounded out: “What are you planning to do?”

When it saw the fake smile plastered across Lin Dong’s face, it suddenly came to its senses and resentfully let out a ‘pah’ sound before slowly backing a safer distance away from Lin Dong. Then, it sat on it’s bottom and said: “Brat, what exactly do you plan on doing? Although this grandfather sable is currently a mere Demon Spirit, you should not irritate me or else we will both be in for a difficult time.”

“Demon Spirit...”

At these words, Lin Dong’s expression suddenly turned a little serious. He had heard that only monstrously powerful Demon

Beasts were able to condense Demon Spirits. Could this tiny thing before his eyes which claimed to be the so-called “Celestial Demon Marten” truly possess such an extremely frightening origin?

“You should have been awoken by me right?” Lin Dong abruptly asked.

“Tch, what do you mean awoken by you. If it were not for that “Fire Ancestral Phantom Flower”, you will not even see me even in another hundred years. Plus, if it were not for this grandfather sable’s help in absorbing the majority of the medicinal power from the “Fire Ancestral Phantom Flower”, you would have been long dead.” The small sable retorted with disdain.

“Alright then, it was indeed all thanks to you that time.” Lin Dong was stunned, but soon after, he chuckled and replied.

Upon seeing Lin Dong so frankly conceding in spite of everything, that small sable was also amazed for a moment. It skeptically stared at the former and said: “Brat, could it be that you’re planning on paralyzing this grandfather sable and then taking the opportunity to gobble up this grandfather samble’s Demon Spirit?”

“What good would consuming your Demon Spirit do for me?” After hearing its words, Lin Dong could not help but ask in curiosity.

“Eh...nothing good nothing good...”

The small sable's claws waved wildly in response. When it saw that Lin Dong seemed not to know of these things, it secretly heaved a sigh of relief in its heart. It had only awoken recently and was extremely weak. Even Lin Dong would have no trouble in gobbling up its Demon Spirit. Thus, due to its innately cautious nature, it had hid in the darkness from the start, not daring to show itself.

“Can you explain why you're here? Don't try to trick me, or else...” Lin Dong expression turned even more serious as he made this inquiry. Once he recalled that this thing had concealed itself within the Stone Talisman buried in his flesh, he felt a sense of unnaturalness.

“I've said it before, I am the owner of the Stone Talisman... alright, I was only one of its previous owners.” When it saw Lin Dong's skeptical expression, the small sable had no choice but to correct itself before continuing: “Not long after I obtained this thing, I was pursued. In the end, I was forced to self-destruct, my Demon Spirit escaping into the Stone Talisman as the final resort...”

“Were you very strong before?” Lin Dong smiled as he asked.

“Strong in a way. For someone like you, I would only need a fart to squash you flat...” The small sable waved its claws as it offhandedly remarked. However, these words caused Lin Dong to roll his eyes, not too convinced in his heart.

“Heh heh, brat. I don't know whether to call you fortunate or unlucky now that you've obtained this Stone Talisman...” The

small sable's eyes suddenly fixed onto Lin Dong as it let out a strange laughter.

“Why?” Lin Dong asked in surprise.

“Its nothing much, perhaps, you will come to understand in the future. Though your death means nothing to me, based on the fact that you do not have an evil heart, I will warn you. Do not let anyone know of this thing, or else, heh heh...”

Lin Dong creased his brow. Soon after, he earnestly nodded his head and said: “Many thanks for your warning.”

The small sable waved his claws in a seemingly magnanimous manner. Of course, its words did not reveal everything. Maybe Lin Dong's death would not directly affect it, but if such a time were to come and if the Stone Talisman once again landed in another's hands, it would not be certain if that person would have designs on its Demon Spirit.

“Alright, I've mostly spoken my part. Do what you must but it would be better for you to act as if this grandfather sable did not exist like before. Other than that, don't think that you've found a good helper. This grandfather sable will not help you with anything and can't do so anyways.” The small sable patted its bottom before scuttling back into the darkness.

“Wait a moment.” Upon realizing the crafty small sable's intent to slip away, Lin Dong hastily shouted out.

“What is it?” After hearing Lin Dong’s words, the little sable vigilantly backed away a little as it replied.

“Since you were once the owner of this Stone Talisman, you should know a little of it’s abilities right?” Lin Dong asked. With a readily available previous owner’s guidance, he would no longer need to blindly grope about.

“I do indeed...yet why should this grandfather sable tell you anything?” The small sable’s eyes turned about as it said.

“Firstly, I can easily dispose of you...” Lin Dong slightly smiled. Upon seeing the small sable’s nervous gaze, he continued: “Secondly, if we cooperate, we would both stand to benefit. From what I can tell, you seem extremely weak. If you help familiarize me with the Stone Talisman, I might be able to find some way to let you recover a little. How does that sound?”

As it heard these words, the small sable’s little eyes immediately shined. It licked its lips as it replied: “I need Elixirs that have Demon Spirit nourishing capabilities, for example, the “Fire Ancestral Phantom Flower” from before.”

“That thing is very rare, but I will do my best.” Lin Dong thought to himself for a while before continuing: “Also, you shouldn’t distrust me either. The current you does not have much choice, the more powerful I grow, the more easily I will be able to assist you in finding those Elixirs with Demon Spirit nourishing capabilities.”

The small sable was silent for a moment. In a now more direct

manner, it said: "Speak, what do you wish to know?"

"Is this Stone Talisman able to temper Mental Energy?" Lin Dong was thrilled as he swiftly inquired. As long as his Mental Energy could reach the 2nd Seal stage, he would have the confidence to do battle with Wei Tong.

"It is!" The small sable pondered a little before nodding its head.

"However, you need to suffer a type of pain, or else it would be futile and useless."

"Bring me there!" Lin Dong's heartbeat slightly sped up as he responded without the slightest bit of hesitation. No matter how much hardship he had to suffer, he would definitely protect the Lin Family!

"Follow me then. The space within the Stone Talisman is very complex and there are too many things here which have been sealed up. Thankfully, it is still possible to enter the place you need." The small sable nodded its head. Soon after, it turned and darted into the darkness. Lin Dong hesitated a little before he gritted his teeth and followed.

Within the darkness, Lin Dong closely followed the small sable along the extremely winding route. After this went on for quite some time, the small sable to his front abruptly disappeared. Lin Dong was immediately alarmed. Just as he was about to hurriedly retreat, a faint light suddenly blossomed before his eyes.

Inside the light, Lin Dong saw two gigantic crystal millstones which were slowly rotating on the spot. As the millstones rotated, a special undulation gently spread outwards.

“What is this?” Lin Dong involuntarily mumbled as he gazed at the two gigantic crystal millstones

“This is the Mind Millstone.”

Lin Dong was unaware of when the small sable had climbed onto his shoulder. Its claws pointed towards the place where the two crystal millstones met. The light was most concentrated there such that even the space seemed slightly distorted.

“If you want to cultivate Mental Energy, just sit there. The millstone will completely crush your Mental Energy and then reform it. If you are able to endure this continuous cycle, your Mental Energy would benefit tremendously. However, if you are unable to endure, it is possible that the roots of your Mental Energy will be damaged, leaving behind some very serious repercussions.”

The small sable’s claws patted Lin Dong as it said: “If it were not for your request, I would never have brought you here. I don’t know which lunatic came up with such a cultivation method but in the past, this grandfather sable had also tried it. From then on, even if you beat me to death, I would not touch this thing. The kind of immense pain that arises from pulverizing your Mental Energy is not something that any ordinary person is capable of bearing.”

Lin Dong silently nodded his head. As he gazed at that Crystal Millstone, he struggled in his heart. In the end, he took in a deep breath and thanked the small sable.

“You can’t possibly be thinking of going there to cultivate your Mental Energy right?” Upon seeing this scene, alarm flashed across the small sable’s tiny eyes as it said.

This time, Lin Dong did not reply. He only smiled in response as his body leaped forward and dashed into the light between the two gigantic Millstones.

“This brat is also a crazy one. I hope that you are able to endure it. After all, this grandfather sable does not intend to harm you...”

At Lin Dong’s actions, the little sable could not help but shake its head as it sighed.